

# INVITING TO ISLAM

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*In The name of Allah  
Most gracious and most merciful*

## **Publisher's Note**

We are presenting this book, **INVITING TO ISLAM** translated from Urdu with great pleasure to the readers. This book is generally useful for every religiously conscious Muslim who feels strongly about his role in and responsibility for disseminating the universal message of Islam and more particularly for all those who are involved and interested in fulfilling the noble mission of inviting people towards Islam.

There exists a lot of misunderstanding regarding Islam and Muslims today. A systematic misinformation campaign is also carried out both in print and electronic media. But it is heartening to note that there is an urge to know more about Islam among non-Muslims and at the same time awareness of the duty to spread the message of Islam and the mission of the Prophet Muhammad is found among Muslim men and women everywhere. This book will be extremely useful for both Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

The author, Maulana Syed Jalaluddin Omari is an internationally renowned writer and reputed Islamic scholar who is also a highly distinguished alumnus of

Jamia Darussalam, Oomerabad. He is at present President of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind and the head of 'Idara-e-Tahqeeq-o-Tasneef -e-Islami' (Institute of Islamic Research) Aligarh. He has been editing a quarterly journal namely 'Tahqeeqat-e-Islami' (Islamic Research) since 1972. He has authored more than three dozen books in Urdu and many of them have been translated into Hindi, Bangla, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Turkish and Arabic.

We are immensely grateful to the erudite writer Maulana Syed Jalaluddin Omari and aslo to the learned translator Prof. U. Mohammad Iqbal that this book of great significance in the field of Dawah is now being published in a good shape by Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers.

We pray to the Almighty God to make this book accessible to a larger segment of the people, to enthuse them to comprehend the message of Islam and the mission of the Last Prophet and then to persuade them to convey and communicate the same to the masses.

*Publisher*



In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Beneficent

## TENTH EDITION (URDU)

Islam is a message from Allah to His human creation. It is a call to all human beings inhabiting the earth. The objective, the methodology and the consequences of this call in this world and the hereafter are found in the Qur'an with great clarity and in great detail. The holy biography of Allah's Messenger (unto him be peace and Allah's blessings) and the traditions contain excellent guidelines in this regard. I have tried in this book to encode the different aspects of this Message in the best manner possible in accordance with what I understood and how much I understood about it in the light of the Qur'an and the Hadith. I have looked upon this call as a vibrant message and I am presenting it here from that perspective. I hope that a clear and lucid concept of this Message will emerge from a study of this book and a warm urge will be felt for the implementation of this call by the readers.



On the basis of the skill of presentation that this book enshrines, some friends go to the extent of describing it as the most effective work in our missionary literature. Sometimes, when I turn over the pages of this book, tears fall and I feel embarrassed that speech has outsmarted the speaker and that a weak and emaciated person has dared to arouse people to live up to the ideals of determination, courage, and steadfastness.

The book was written a long time back in 1968; I kept on thinking further on the subject ever since. I was intending to revise it. But a considerably long period elapsed owing to several engagements. By Allah's grace I was able to revise this book to some extent. The whole book has been read. I have endeavoured to raise the linguistics level. As far as discourses are concerned, a little alteration and improvement have been made in some of them. Sequences in some discourses have been altered. Some have been written afresh. In particular, the third chapter on the Essential Attributes for the Missionary Work, new material has been added. A booklet, اسلام - ایک دین دعوت "Islam - A Proselytising Religion", written by me, has been in circulation for a long time. Its English translation is available. Some of the points from that booklet have been included here. I

have an impression that compared to an earlier version this edition is in a better shape. Its size is almost doubled. Human work cannot be free from defects and so, in spite of best efforts, the presence of errors and defects is certain. Therefore a plea is made to men of erudition that they may bring the deficiencies in my book to my notice, so that I may set them right. Allah will reward the scholars and I will be profoundly thankful to them.

It is Allah's grace that He has conferred popularity on this book through His special favour. Now this is its tenth edition in Urdu. It was published in Pakistan too. This book is a part of the syllabus followed by certain circles. Friends are paying attention to the translation of this book. Its Telugu and Kannada versions have been published. This book is being translated into other languages too. Jamia Darus Salam, Oomerabad got the English translation with the title 'Inviting to Islam' published by the Islamic Foundation Trust, Chennai, 600012. This translation is by Prof. Usman Mohammad Iqbal, a renowned litterateur of English and translator of certain other books of this writer. Now this translation is being published, with due permission of the Foundation, in a better shape, by Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers. Prof. Muhammad Iqbal has revised the translation and

updated it with the latest Urdu edition. I am grateful to the translator that he has invested a considerable amount of labour in giving this book English form. May Allah the Exalted bless him immensely.

*Syed Jalaluddin Omari*

September 15, 2011

## **PREFACE**

Islam is God-oriented way of life. But today, man is negligent towards both God and the way of life ordained by Him. This is not a new phenomenon; it is actually a chronic ailment. Repeatedly man has turned his back upon God and neglected His religion. At the same time, God's elect repeatedly gave a stirring call and turned the attention of man towards God's religion. The most unfortunate feature of modern times is that the community, entrusted with the noble task of awakening mankind and conveying the divinely ordained way of life to it, does not recognize that it has the task cut out for it. It has no inkling what a crucial role it is expected to play in a world oblivious of God. Both the Muslim community and the rest of humanity seem to have gone into a coma of indifference.

The past history of the Muslim community reminds us that Allah sent down His religion for the last time and ordered it to disseminate the message of Islam among the peoples of the world, to endeavour to make the message dominant, to promote goodness, to prevent people from the pursuit of evil, to point out the path of virtue, to keep

people away from vice, to eradicate oppression and tyranny, and to establish justice and the rule of law. The community heard God's order in earnest and got ready to implement it. Hostile forces attempted to suppress it and oppose it in every possible way but the community stood firm with this determination that either Allah's will should prevail or the community will stake everything including life. The determination was genuine and so the hostile forces were ultimately defeated. The standard of falsehood was lowered and the religion of God triumphed. The darkness of evil was dispelled and there arose the dawn of virtue. This was the most appropriate state of the community.

And the community remained in that state for some period. Then the decline ensued. That restiveness which enabled it to confront falsehood waned. That grit and determination which enabled it to make Islam triumphant became debilitated. That zeal and ardour which brought about a worldwide stir and agitation and shook the centres of wrong doctrines, corrupt culture, perverse morality and unredeemed politics lost vigour and warmth. In such a state of affairs, leave alone the question of the spread of Islam in other areas, the effects of Islam on the Muslim community itself became vague and blurred. Nonetheless, the community as a whole had faith in the basics of Islam and in the supremacy of its legal system and in the right of Islam to regulate and rule

over human existence on the whole. There were no debates in the community on the following issues: Has Islam come to rule or can it remain subjected? Is it necessary for Islam to have the upper hand or should it make a compromise on its independence? Which is proper for Islam - to be in conflict with falsehood or to reconcile itself with it?

The period that we are passing through is most probably the period of the worst decline of Islam. It is not only in the area of practice but also in that of ideology, the community faces decline. There are people in the community, and they are gaining prominence rapidly, who question the very postulates which constitute the foundation of Islam and who are incapable of appreciating the greatness and sublimity of the task entrusted to the community. These people think that it is an act of insanity to call people towards Islam and to do your utmost for its dominance. In their programme, they accommodate everything and even ensure freedom of action but there is no space for the call to faith and for the endeavour to make faith successful. Their principled stand is: Do not resist evil; do not criticise what is dear to evil; do nothing to arouse the fears and suspicions of the authorities that be. The concept of 'Khair' (goodness) whose worldwide dissemination God has ordered is an alien concept to such people.

To make matters worse there are people in this

community who distort Islam very badly in the name of Islam. To such people, presenting Islam as a purpose of life is ignorance; inviting people to spread Islam and make it dominant is an expression of unfamiliarity with the purpose of religion; they interpret in a different way every verse of the Qur'an that advocates revolution; they look upon the revival of faith and confrontation against deviation and ignorance as an act of the misinterpretation of faith. The truth is that no other perspective on life is so grossly and unjustly distorted as the religion of God. This distortion is resorted to not only by the denigrators of Islam but also by the putative followers. Islam bears the excesses inflicted upon it both by the outsiders and the insiders.

The following questions are not under discussion here. How long did the ideal era of the Muslim community last? When and how did the decline actually begin? How many years did the first phase last? To which historical period did the second phase belong? Were the signs of the decline foreseen? Was the decline a consequence of wrong ideas and thoughts and of political and cultural subjugation? However, these questions demand research. It will be fruitful. The decline of the community after reaching the peak was not abrupt but steady and gradual. The phases of the gradual decline are mentioned here.

In every era of Islamic history there had always been

individuals and sometimes parties to function as a bulwark against seditious activities. They proved the truthfulness of Islam through intellectual and spiritual proofs whenever perverse systems of thought reared their ugly head. They maintained the momentum of social reform, discharged the duty of propagating Islam, and kept alive the concept that Islam was meant to triumph. Even today the community is not without such individuals and parties. The call to Islam continues as an activity. Every bosom nurtures the fondness for the supremacy of Islam. Espousing this cause, authors have written a great deal and rendered ideal and commendable services. The present book relates to their work. Though modest in scope, it deals with the topic comprehensively and with almost all the issues pertaining to it. It is hoped that the relevant material found passim in voluminous books of erudition will be available in this single volume. In addition, the reader may come across some new aspects of the material which will enhance the comprehensiveness of the book.

There are four main areas of discussion. In the first part, the task of prophethood is elucidated. It shows why messengers of Allah come into the world and how they discharge their great and revolutionary duty. This information is necessary because the ideals of this community and of the prophetic mission are the same. In the light of the model provided by the Prophets, the



community has to proceed for the realization of its ideals. The second part deals with the call of Islam. The true nature of this work is exemplified. Then emphasis is laid on the practice of Islam, because, without this practical implementation of Islam, the mission of propagation will not yield any result. The sequence of propagation, its principles and etiquette, and the concept of success and failure of the propagation are discussed. Towards the conclusion of this part, it is pointed out why Islam is rejected and who gain Islam. In the third part, the special characteristics required for the missionary work are indicated. In the fourth and final part, the relationship between an organization and missionary work is outlined. In addition, the factors which strengthen an Islamic organization are also stressed.

Forbiddingly erudite and investigative approach to any issue has been eschewed. The thesis of this book is presented in a language which is extremely simple and easy to understand. May Allah accept this offering through His grace and may His devotees derive maximum benefit from it.

*Syed Jalaluddin Omari*

9th November 1968

## Chapter I

### A. The Prophets' Task and its Nature

#### i. Why do the Prophets come?

In this world, a place of trial, man has to face trial day and night. God puts mankind to test in order to observe who is obedient and who is disobedient. In other words, it may be stated that man stands on the crossroads of Islam and non-Islam. Islam calls towards the worship of God, whereas 'kufr' is synonymous with rebellion against God. Man has to choose one of these two roads; he does not have a third alternative. Before putting man to such a severe test, God forewarned him through the Prophets about the right way and the wrong way and about the key to success and the key to failure. As a result, man who wanted to please God could please Him and the man who wanted to court self-perdition could do so all by himself.

إِنَّا عَلَيْنَا لِلْهُدَىٰ وَإِنَّا لَنَّا لِلْآخِرَةِ وَالْأُولَىٰ ۝

*Verily We take upon Us to guide and verily unto Us (belong) the End and the Beginning.*

*(Qur'an, 92:12,13)*

God has granted man innumerable blessings.

However, the grant of His religion is the greatest blessing. He showed man the way that renders him successful in this world and the Hereafter. It is the Prophets who transmitted this blessing of God to mankind. If they had not appeared, man would not have received this religion of God and he would have been deprived of guidance. He could have complained to God: "O Lord! You created me and you left me in the lurch. I did not know how to secure your pleasure and how to escape from your wrath. I had no means of knowing what actions please you and what actions displease you. In these circumstances how could I have sought your approval and how could I have avoided the way of failure?" This kind of excuse is no longer valid because no epoch was devoid of prophets who had been showing the way of guidance to man.

رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۚ

*Messengers who gave good news as well as warning, that mankind, after (the coming) of Messengers, should have no plea against Allah. (Qur'an, 4:165)*

## ii. When do the Prophets make their advent?

The first man on earth, created by God, had the distinction of being His messenger too. God made it directly clear to him what guidance and non-guidance were. This first man lived exactly in accordance with the instructions issued to him. However, the race, which

sprang from this noble soul, did not always stick to that right royal road which could have entitled it to the reward of God. Instead, it repeatedly deviated from that path and courted God's anger. It is an undeniable fact that when man's indifference crosses the limit and man resorts to open rebellion, he becomes an imponderable nuisance and qualifies for liquidation. But, God's mercy prevails over His anger. He wants to save His slaves from His punishment up to the last moment. Therefore, whenever man rebelled and trampled upon God's wishes, God sent His Messengers to forewarn man and to make it known to him in which direction he should move and in which direction he was moving, and to impose punishment for his wrong-doings upon him when he had fully apprehended their consequences. These Messengers of God made their advent in every age and in every nation and created awareness about the fate that awaited man; they made poignant remarks about the rebellious pattern of behaviour, pointed out that revolt was unbecoming of man because man was created in the first instance for submission and servility to God, and that if he did not change this pattern of behaviour, God's punishment would reach him by surprise leaving no escape route for him. This truth is conveyed in the following Quranic words:

وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا ۝

*Nor would We punish until We had sent a messenger  
(to give warning). (17:15)*

### **iii. The Beneficence of the Prophets**

The similitude of the Messengers of God is that they are like a flowing water-body bringing satiety to tens and thousands of people. If the farmland of humanity has ever been irrigated and covered with greenery, it has been rendered so only through them. If they had never been born, this farmland would have been laid waste and turned to ashes. The world offers them nothing; instead, it stands to gain from them. From the materialistic point of view, their existence is not self - but people-oriented. They don't come to extort anything from anyone; instead, they come to enrich everyone. The most satisfying part is that in this dedicated endeavour they experience inner peace and relief after staking their all. They remain assured that the energy, the strength and the talent given to them by God have not been misused but put to proper use. This type of assurance with regard to their vocation is not felt by any man in the world except by the Prophet and their followers. This is a genuine recompense granted to them for services rendered.

Generally speaking, the leaders who are looked upon as benefactors of mankind and who inspire a sense of pride in their followers about their leadership aim at achieving worldly success for man under one pretext or another. Some leaders keep the ideal of economic welfare before them; some others, the ideal of educational planning; some uphold the cause of national freedom;

some are consumed by the passion of scientific progress; and still some others are obsessed with cultural and social reform. But the Messengers of God do not espouse any such plan or movement. Their objective in life is to convey God's message to mankind and to drive home this fact that human beings are God's creatures and slaves and that they should uphold this servility to God in all their transactions. Anyone who accepts this message merits God's blessings; anyone who rejects it distances himself from the mercies of God. This beneficence of God's Messengers is of such magnitude that none can acknowledge it sufficiently.

#### **iv. The Prophets solve the main problem of man**

That there should be economic parity or that there should be widespread adult literacy, or that there should be such a level of growth in industry and technology as to render all necessities of life easily accessible, or that there should be elimination of poverty and of abject dependence of one man upon another is NOT the main agenda of man. This assertion *prima facie* may sound incredible and it may not be far-fetched to assure that this assertion may be treated as simplistic and a result of unfamiliarity with ground realities, because all along the world has been looking upon these issues as fundamental, and even today top priority is given to them. However, notwithstanding the inherent importance

of these issues, it is a fact that these issues are minor and the offshoot of the major agenda. The people, engaged in the pruning, tending and caring of these branches, are actually engaged in a superficial and commonplace activity. They have not turned their focus on that spot from which these branches emerge and spread all over life. Only those individuals remain focused upon that spot to the last breath of their lives who have been endowed with divine insight and who make their advent as the world leaders and mentors in the right sense of the word. Those individuals are known as God's emissaries and messengers.

What is basic to man is that he should be aware of his beginning and end and should not ignore God who created him and to whom he should return. The fact of the matter is that man claims total autonomy and he lives as though there would be no Hereafter and no accountability. Disobedience to God will result in punishment to him and yet he hastens that punishment. He has to avoid God's anger and, yet by his misdeeds, he is courting that punishment without respite. On the whole, man has adopted an extremely perverse posture towards God which he should not have adopted under any circumstance.

Human success in this world and the next can be achieved only when man becomes God's servant and takes upon himself God's yoke. Life in the Hereafter will

be blissful and all the knotty problems in this world will be solved. Belief in God is the only and truest foundation of human life; disbelief in Him is the root of all evils. A person who deviates from obedience to God and who is oblivious of His chastisement is an ill-fated person. Here oppression exists because man does not have strong belief in God and the Hereafter; here politics and economics have become corrupt because man has freed himself from God's edicts; here immorality and obscenity are due to the fact people do no longer respect God's instructions; here, instead of education, ignorance is widely prevalent because man is deprived of the light given by God. That is the reason why the Prophets raise this basic issue with all the force at their command and that is - Believe in God and worship and serve Him. Their message is none other than this.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١﴾  
الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنًا ۖ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ  
بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ ۖ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلّٰهِ أُنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢﴾

*"O Ye People! Worship your Guardian Lord, who created you and those who came before you that ye may become righteours, who has made the earth your couch, and the heavens your canopy; and sent down rain from the heavens; and brought forth therewith fruits for your sustenance; then set not up rivals unto Allah when ye know (the truth)".*

*(Qur'an 2: 21,22)*

The Holy Qur'an explains what was revealed by God



to the Prophets and what teaching they presented to the people as follows:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا  
فَاعْبُدُونِ ۝

*"Not a messenger did We send before thee without this inspiration sent by Us to him: that there is no (other) God but Me; therefore worship and serve Me."*  
(Qur'an 21:25)

They preach that people should worship and serve and be afraid of God. If they do so, the viciousness of their lives will be eradicated. Instead of following in the footsteps of those who defy and rebel against God, they should obey the Prophets, who will lead them to the ultimate victory.

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ۝ الَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي  
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ۝

*"But fear Allah and obey me; and follow not the bidding of those who are extravagant, who make mischief in the land, and mend not (their ways)."*

(Qur'an 26:150-152)

This is the message in a nutshell that the Prophets ever preach to the world, and they spend their days and nights devising methods to convey it, and they dedicate their blessed lives to the dissemination of this message.

## V. The Prophets prevail

In the Qur'an this is God's canon with regard to the

## Prophets:

كُتِبَ اللَّهُ لَا غُلْبَةَ إِلَّا وَرُسُلِي ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

*"Allah has decreed, 'It is I and My messengers who must prevail!' For Allah is Strong, Mighty."*

*(Qur'an 58:21)*

This means that Allah grants dominance to the Messengers over their foes. This is His decision. No one can alter it. The dominance of the Messengers referred to here can be of two types - one, it may be rational and inferential; two it may be materialistic and political. Brief elucidation of both types is given here.

## VI. Dominance through rational proofs

Allah's Messengers successfully explain the truth to their respective nations that God exists and He is one. They persuade them to believe in Him and not to deny Him as belief in Him will make them successful in this world and the next and denying Him will be ruinous to them. The Messengers criticize the prominent defects in thought and action manifest in their respective communities which make them vulnerable to God's punishment and provide them with an alternative set of principles approved by God and whose adoption will render their lives aesthetically satisfying. In favour of those principles, they present such strong proofs that their intellectual superiority over their rivals is established.

## **VII. Prophets render their argument irrefutable:**

For this task, Allah endows His Messengers with such features which are special to them and not found in others. These features enable them to execute their task with such finesse that no flaw can be detected from any angle. The first feature is that God's Messengers outrival the rest of humanity in the matter of intellectual acumen and moral prowess. This is the reason why none of those quite familiar with them ever dare to describe the Messengers as liars or the message as fraud. If anyone dares to do so, his heart castigates him. The second feature is that these Messengers enjoy such a high social status that they can directly address those people occupying top positions and those at the helm of political affairs and convey God's message to them without the slightest trepidation and reluctance. The third feature is that they secure God's directives and instructions directly in the execution of this task. At every critical stage, they get instruction from God with regard to their next move and the method of completing the task. On account of this instruction and guidance, their whole mission is devoid of human failings. The fourth feature is that they are granted such miracles that on observing them one can easily come to the conclusion that they are genuine Messengers of God and that under His express orders they are creating awareness among the people about their impending fate. The fifth feature is that God sends down

His message, encoded in such a manner that it is unlike the obscure and intricate expression of the philosophers defying comprehension and dissimilar to the pedestrian expression, hearing or reading which a sober and cultured person may find unbearable. Instead, it is encoded in such a crystal clear, fascinating and eloquent manner that the heart and the mind find it irresistible. The sixth feature is that these Messengers are given such powerful interpretative skills that they are able to unravel the implications, the subtleties, and the merits of the revealed message, leaving no aspect unexplored. Along with these features, God's Messengers employ the best persuasive and motivating strategies to call those people who have strayed away from God and strive to the maximum extent possible to let them know what their fate is going to be and to let them devise way and means of escaping from the punishment in the Hereafter. These Messengers put to use their extraordinary powers and uncommon skills for the people's salvation; they employ all possible strategies to unite the people with God. They present strong proofs in order that God's religion should enter into their hearts; they awaken their dormant conscience so that people might learn from the past and avoid those mistakes which ruined the preceding nations and groups. This mission is a highly trying job, which Allah's Messengers continue to do for a long period, until this fact is completely laid bare that the way to salvation

is the way of servility towards God. After this, opposition to their mission may continue but in the arena of argument no one can defeat them. They validate their argument to such an extent that even the foes bear testimony to the truth of the Prophets' message in their heart of hearts.

وَجَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنْفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا

*"And they denied them, wrongfully, and out of pride, though their souls acknowledged them" (Qur'an 27:14)*

### VIII The Prophets achieve their goal

When a Prophet conveys his message irrefutably, it means he has succeeded in performing his duty, irrespective of the fact that he did his job single-handedly until he reached his Lord or that no one dared to ally with him in the job. If the prophet conveys his message to the people wisely and with supporting evidence, he has discharged his missionary responsibility, imposed by God on him. No additional qualification is required to declare him successful. After the prophet's missionary work, if a person is not converted, it is his own misfortune that he persists in sleep after receiving the call to wake up. The way to success or the way to failure has been shown to him and he selects the latter. If people deliberately reject the truth, it is no reflection upon the prophet's efficiency. Instead it is a reflection of the rejecters' obstinacy and they are accountable for their

attitudinal problem. Allah's Messengers will not be grilled in this matter. Prophet Muhammad (May Allah bless and greet him) says, "In the history of the Prophets, there was a Prophet, only one member of whose community confirmed his prophethood." (Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Iman, chapter on the Prophet's statement that he would be the first to intercede.) Who can aver that such a Prophet left the world as a failed Prophet? He exerted his utmost in the way of the Lord and he strove to the best of his capacity. Therefore, it is our belief that he deserved complete victory and he was completely successful.

### **IX. Some of Allah's Prophets laid down their lives in the way of the Lord**

Notwithstanding their sincere and dedicated endeavours, the message of the Prophets was rejected by their respective communities and these communities began to persecute them. Some hapless communities put their Prophets to sword. In the dark record of the Jewish misdeeds, such examples are found.

أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِقْنَا كَذِبْتُمْ  
وَفَرِقْنَا تَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

*"Is it that whenever there comes to you a Messenger with what ye yourselves desire not, ye are puffed up with pride? - some ye called impostors, and others ye slay!"*

(Qur'an 2:87)

Not in this passage alone, but in other places too, the

**Qur'an asserts that the Jewish hands are smeared with the blood of the Prophets.** (Qur'an 3:181; 4:155)

### **X. The Prophets are blessed with wordly success too:**

Though Prophets have encountered similar incidents, they have received special help and support from Allah. Sheltered and defended by Him, they are in a position to convey the message most effectively. The foes hinder their progress, indulge in persecution, and resort to conspiracies and still they do not succeed in taking an extreme step and in exterminating them. Allah delivers them from their foes.

إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ ۝

*"We will, without doubt, help our Messengers and those who believe, (both) in this world's life and on the Day when the witnesses will stand forth." (Qur'an 40:51)*

The history of the Prophets tells us that when a nation does not return to the truth in spite of the utmost endeavours and incessant striving of God's Prophet and hatches plots to suppress his voice and liquidate his life, then the Prophet prays, "O Lord! I called them towards you by straining every nerve but they did not open the doors of their hearts. They have become a huge burden on your earth and they deserve to be eliminated." When a prophet reaches this stage of frustration in his mission of reforming his community, then the time for the

community's destruction has arrived. Then God does not allow the community further respite which could be utilised by it to execute its well-planned and murderous scheme against the Prophet. God orders the Prophet to take his followers and depart from the midst of the community and migrate to another place. When the Prophet and his followers migrate, then Allah directly sends His punishment to the rest of the community and finishes them off. Allah's Prophet and his followers remain safe and secure from the punishment.

لَهُمْ نُنَبِّئُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كَذَلِكَ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نُنَبِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

*"In the end We deliver Our Messengers and those who believe: thus it is fitting on Our part that We should deliver those who believe!"*  
(Qur'an 10:103)

After the destruction of the community, Allah's Messenger and his followers inherit the earth or secure a land where they can freely and peacefully live according to the principles of their faith. The following verses make this point.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُوذُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا ۚ  
فَأَوَّحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَلَنُسَكِّنَنَّ الْأَرْضَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ  
لَكُمْ لِمَن خَافَ مَقَامِي وَخَافَ وَجْهِي ﴿١٠٥﴾

*"And the unbelievers said to their Messengers: 'Be sure we shall drive you out of our land, or ye shall return to our religion. 'But their Lord inspired (this message) to them.' verily We shall cause the wrong - doers to perish! And Verily, We shall cause you to*



*abide in the land, and succeed them. This for such as fear the time when they shall stand before My tribunal - such as fear My punishment."* (Qur'an 14:13,14)

This state of affairs comes into existence only when a whole nation or its majority rejects the message of God's Messenger or his followers are just a few. But if this is not the case, and a considerable number of people have been converted, then no clandestine punishment is brought down for the destruction of the disbelievers but God eliminates them over a period of time through the agency of the Prophet and his comrades. During this period, an intense struggle is waged between the believers and the disbelievers. During this struggle, all those who have the slightest competence to accept the Prophet's message slowly and steadily get converted and when their numbers become large enough to smash the strength of the foes, then God orders them to take up arms against them and after a few encounters, the disbelievers are crushed in a decisive battle, and power is transferred to the believers. After this, ideologies denying God or advocating plurality of deities are removed lock, stock and barrel and Allah's religion is established in toto and God's will prevails everywhere.<sup>1</sup>

## **XI. The Nature of the Task of the Prophets**

Before concluding this discussion, it is necessary to

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1. Exemplification of this is given in the following chapter which deals with the Prophet's achievement.

throw light on a very significant aspect. Otherwise the true nature of the task of the prophets will not become clear. A Messenger of God concentrates on conveying the message, and he does nothing else beside this, and whatever he does conforms to his missionary goal and is an integral part of his message, under all circumstances, whether his nation opposes him or accepts him and his system of allegiance. Through proofs, through his character, and through his sincerity and affection, he makes his point clear when his nation rejects him and persists in that act of rejection unto the last that it is following a wrong path and that the consequence will be devastating. When the Prophet secures followers from his nation, his task becomes more comprehensive. In spite of this enlargement of the task, no difference does it make to the basic position of his. At the initial stage, he conveys his message; and at the final stage too he conveys the message.

When an ideology, particularly a comprehensive ideology, steps out of the academic and theoretical boundaries and enters the arena of praxis, then certain issues which were not there earlier or which were of marginal value arise with force. They may be of ideological and of practical nature. Believers naturally demand that these issues must be clearly settled; the unconvinced people wish to understand how the ideology behaves both in the field of theory and in that of practical

experience. If you are an exponent of an ideology, it becomes necessary for you to answer both theoretical and practical questions with regard to your ideology. At that time, in the capacity of an ideologue, you will remove the mental blocks of the people; in the capacity of a statesman, you will solve their problems; and, in the capacity of a civilizational architect, you will be busy in ushering in a new era of civilization. All these facets of your comprehensive mission relate to the espousal of your ideology and to the conveying of your message. The execution of these tasks will not adversely affect your position as a missionary; instead, it will consolidate this position of yours.

In a similar manner, when the missionary work of a messenger of God assumes a wider scope, then many new problems emerge, and many new crises appear. For example, the following questions arise:

(a) Which aspects of the civilization/ sociology/ethics and customs of the believers are in agreement with the new ideology and which are not?

(b) Which lifestyle is correct and which is incorrect?

(c) How should co-religionists be treated and how should the opponents be treated?

(d) What are the principles of compromise and on what bases is war permitted?

A Messenger of God does not ignore these questions;

he answers them satisfactorily. At this stage, instructions regarding ethics and social life are given, principles of monetary transactions are explained, orders regarding politics and governance are included, judicial pronouncements and penal laws are made, and regulations pertaining to war and peace find their place. In short, at this stage, the Messenger of God gives a total picture of culture and civilization and conditions of life. From this angle, his work becomes multifaceted. It will be seen that at once he warns and gives good news, he organizes his followers, he utilises their services to convey the message, he carries on the work of arbitration in their midst, and makes war and signs treaty with the opponents of God. This does not mean that he has radically and unrecognisably changed his role from one thing to another. Nay, all these jobs he does only in the capacity of a missionary. He does not occupy any other position. Whether God's Messenger is a preacher, judge or ruler, teacher of morals or architect of civilization, an army commander or leader, in every capacity he essentially remains a person whose duty is to invite people towards God. His message may assume a thousand shapes; in every shape the soul of a missionary remains intact. If no one responds to his call, and he is assassinated, the messenger dies in harness as a missionary. He is at the post of his duty when he as a judge passes judgment in accordance with God's will.

Any mission that ceases to be a mission at any stage has lost its identity, and is deprived of the purpose for whose fulfilment it came into existence in the first instance. Many people are of the opinion that a Messenger of God is merely a preacher and his message is synonymous with sermonising and exhortation. It is clear that these people have not truly comprehended what 'DAWAH' (mission) is, and they do not have its wide ramifications before them. They had better apply their minds to these points in all seriousness.

## **B. The Great Achievement of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the field of Propagation:**

### **i. Declaration of Prophethood**

Let us conjure up in our imagination the era when five hundred years had passed after the departure of Jesus Christ. The teachings of the prophets were not available in their pristine purity. Worship of one God was extinct; man had forgotten God. It was ordained that man should worship only one God but man had enslaved himself to innumerable deities. God had created him in a state of emancipation from all types of slavery except that of slavery to Himself. But the manacles of bondage to kings, clerics and capitalists were on his feet. God had elevated him to the highest status but man had reached the nadir of degradation and did not realize what his real place and position was. He prostrated himself before every object like the earth, the sky, the moon, the sun, the trees, the mountains, fire, water, wind, and was ready to bow his head before everyone. Under these circumstances, Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) declared that he was a Messenger of God and

achieved such an astounding success in such a short period that is unprecedented in history and still maintains an unbroken record. If this achievement is described as the greatest revolutionary feat, it will not be wide of the mark.

## **II. Preaching about the worship of one God**

The mission of Muhammad (blessings and peace be unto him) was to preach the worship of one God. It was about the sublimity and greatness of man; it was a mission of leading man from a low level to a high position. Man was not aware of his real status; the Prophet created awareness in him about it. Man was in a state of hibernation for long, the Prophet woke him up; man was not aware of his role, the Prophet pointed it out to him. Man was surrounded on all sides by a host of false deities, the Prophet advised him to worship only one God because there is only one God. Some people claimed to be gods and some were made gods by man. The Prophet defied both categories of deities and declared that all claimants to godhead are false. The designation of 'God' belongs to the one and only Creator of heavens and the earth. By deifying any thing as God, man has given that object an illegal and unjustifiable rank. As long as he does not reject such pretentious deities, he cannot set hope on salvation. The Prophet made it very clear that when man renounces the worship

of that one real God who has created this vast panorama of the universe and returns to the worship of several 'deities' who have no right to be called 'deities', then man occupies a wrong position in life's arena and every step of his is misdirected consequently, leaving no hope that he would ever come to a happy end. The right pattern of behaviour for man is not to recognize any sovereignty beside that of God, not to recognize anyone else as the Creator, the Qur'an, the Ruler, the Deity, the Provider of sustenance and not to recognize anyone else as capable of providing gain and inflicting harm and to reject all kinds of slavery and to willingly accept slavery to one God. Everything in the universe has been created by God and to allot it the place of God is a grievous sin which can never be forgiven.

This proclamation of Muhammad (blessings and peace be unto him) was a proactive critique of the pattern of behaviour in vogue in his times. It implied that all those who were claimants to godhead would have to give up that position and that all those who were worshipping self-crafted deities would have to cease worshipping them. The godhead of all other deities should have to give place to the overlordship of one God. He alone should be adored. He alone should be worshipped. His writ alone should run. He alone should be feared. On Him alone should hope be set. His orders alone should be followed. He alone should be obeyed. His approval alone



should be sought and His anger alone should be eschewed. On hearing this proclamation of the Prophet, a vast concourse owing allegiance to a plurality of gods set up a roar. **أَجْعَلِ الْإِلَهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا ۖ إِنَّ هَذَا شَيْءٌ عَجَابٌ ۝** "Has he made (merged) all gods into one God? Truly this is a strange thing!" (Qur'an 38:5)

### III. There was a reaction.

This preaching came like a bolt from the blue, its thunderclap shook that edifice of thoughts and reflections in which all false deities and their votaries had taken refuge. Anyone who lent his ears to this preaching gave all his attention to it. The addressees could not ignore its force and appeal altogether. They felt in their bones that the message was irresistible and would have very deep and far-reaching consequences, that it dealt a blow to their faith and religion, that it sounded a death-knell to their beliefs and precepts, and that it was a frontal attack on their civilization and social structure. The advancement of this religion entailed the consigning of their world of sanctity to flames and the construction of a brave new world. When this alarm was sounded, forces were mobilised against the Prophet (blessings and peace be unto him) and open hostilities began to check the onward march of his mission. Every pretender to godhead stood up in self-defence and every purohit girded up his loins to defend his respective idol. Voices

were raised from every quarter.

أَنۢ أُمۡسُواْ وَاصۡبِرُواْ عَلَىٰ الصِّمۡتِ إِنۡ هَٰذَا شَيْءٌ يُرَادُّ مَا سَبَقْنَا بِهَٰذَا فِي  
الۡأَوَّلَةِ ۚ إِنۡ هَٰذَا إِلَّا خِلَاقٌ

*"Walk ye away and remain constant to your gods! for this is truly a thing designed (against you)! We never heard (the like) of this in the last religion. This is nothing but a made-up tale! (Qur'an 38: 6,7)*

There began a grim struggle in the social set-up wherein the Prophet's mission had its origins. The Prophet and his companions had to pass through such severe ordeals that only the devotees of God could have endured. This was not a quarrel between individuals over money matters; this was not a property dispute; this was not a mutual rivalry and contest between tribes; this was not a question of one group gaining control and of another group losing control. Instead, the struggle was triggered by the call that man should voluntarily and wholly submit to One God and worship and serve Him alone. It is a fact that man is God's slave and he has to submit to Him alone. This fact was being acknowledged by Muhammad (blessings and peace be unto him) and his companions and it was being disputed by his opponents. So this struggle was being waged between truth and falsehood and between a well-established precept and a baseless belief. The Prophet's message was in strict accordance with human nature and so found an echo in every bosom and was spreading against all odds. People

came attracted towards it from all directions to such an extent that its supporters sprang even from the houses of its sworn enemies. In this way, to raise aloft God's proposition it gained doughty champions from the front rows of the forces of falsehood.

#### **IV. Standard-bearers of God's Proposition**

There was a lofty ideal before the followers of Muhammad (blessings and peace be unto him). They rose to perform a great duty. They had to bear the responsibility of being witnesses to that religion which they had embraced as religion of truth and of making that religion universal which they got from God. They were told, "Awake, arise. The world has forgotten God, go and remind it of God. Men are blissfully unaware of their fate; get up and bring awareness to them. Man is moving headlong towards his ruin and perdition, catch up with him and restrain him. Fairness and justice are on the wane; rush to revive them. Noble values are on the way out and vices are gaining ground; it is now your obligation to firmly establish the time-tested ideals and replace reprehensible things."

Under the dynamic leadership of Muhammad (blessings and peace be unto him), a value-based community was formed which was totally different from all other communities and groups. Every other group was motivated by self-aggrandisement but this community

was putting all its interests at stake for the sake of God's religion. This was not a group of traders trying to promote its trade; this was not a group of capitalists interested in increasing its capital; this community was not desirous of securing its rights from the government and feeling happy after securing them. This community was not engaged in protecting its interests and feeling contented after securing them. This community did not aim at a compromise with God's enemies and did not shut up its shop after fulfilling its aim and did not go to sleep contentedly. Instead, this community comprised loyalists of God, men of faith and submission to God, men who sought success in the Hereafter, men who loved God. They had no other aim than the aim of conveying the religion of God to the people of God. In their earnest endeavour they were not ready to accept anything less than the goal of persuading man to accept the worship of one God after renouncing devotion to non-God. Every member of this group was a soldier of God saturated with the aspiration of making God's religion supreme and dominant. This aspiration was the source of its existence; this aspiration was the altar at which it was prepared to lay down its life.

## **V. A period of trials began**

This state of affairs set in motion tremendous tumult all around. The converts to this religion were obliged to

face a sea of troubles; friends turned into foes, love changed into hatred, smiles were replaced by frowns, opposing forces pounced upon them with a maddening ferocity. A sister got beaten by her brother, parents ill-treated their children, a wife was victimised by her husband, a friend became a source of torture. In spite of all this, those who internalised the message of the Qur'an endured injury after injury but continued to smile. Enemies tested their skill in archery, believers tested the strength of their chests. The believers were dragged and pulled on the burning sands, they were made to lie down on the burning coal, still they remained embodiments of steadfastness. The birds could enjoy cool shade; the believers could not. The animals in the forest could enjoy freedom; the believers' feet were chained. They championed truth and so they were penalised for it. They accepted the message of the Prophet thinking that everything of theirs belonged to God and they would spend everything lavishly where He ordered them to spend. They bartered themselves away to please God; they got the price for their lives and so they did not care when and how they would die. The fact of the matter is that the Prophet's message would be welcomed even today by only that person for whom death is dearer than life, who loves God and His religion more than his wife and children, who can cut the knot of relationships for the sake of truth, who can harm his own thriving trade,

and who would be ever ready to sacrifice his own peace and tranquillity. Otherwise the demands made by this religion, for which the Prophet devoted his whole life and all his assets, can not be met by one who holds life and children dear, who is a prisoner of contacts, who demands security and seeks serenity, and who loves his business and capital assets. This is the clear assertion of the holy Qur'an:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ  
اقتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسْكَنٌ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِمَّا  
أَمَرَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَجِهَادٌ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرٍ ۚ وَاللَّهُ لَا  
يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

*"Say: if it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred: the wealth that ye have gained; the commerce in which ye fear a decline: or the dwellings in which ye delight - are dearer to you than Allah or His Messenger, or the striving in His cause; - then wait until Allah brings about His decision: and Allah guides not the rebellious."*  
(Qur'an 9:24)

Muhammad (blessings and peace be unto him) informed his followers at the very first step, "Don't think there will be roses, roses all the way. The way you have selected can be trodden by only that man who looks upon hardships as comforts of the soul and who proceeds on his way dismissing the greatest tragedy as though it were not a tragedy at all. This is the way of truth and it is not a

new way. You will find the footprints of the Prophets and their successors on it and these very footprints would be a model for you. They gave up every thing but they did not beat a retreat. When you have to proceed along this way and there is no other way for you, why inquire about the length of the way? When the path is paved with sharp stones, why complain about the blistered feet? When you have stepped into a valley of thorns, why go on counting the thorns? Just bear in mind! When you have professed faith, then there is no permission to mouth any word of complaint. To reach the end of this route, there is a need for unlimited resolve and determination and infinite renunciation and sacrifice. If a person is tempted by every enticing thing of the world and seduced by every yearning of the soul, he can never reach the destination of faith. Truth demands your life and you are worried about stumbling! For a believer, desires cannot become roadblocks. Nor can wife and children, nor can wealth, nor can power and status. It is because there would be negation of faith then and against the custom of the people pursuing truth. Time for death is preordained and death will arrive at the appointed time. Then why should not man lay down life in the way of God? Life is a huge asset; man can buy both the worldly merit and the merit of the Hereafter through it. Fortunate is the man who gives up this world in preference for the Hereafter because tomorrow divine blessings are going to fall to his lot.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كَلْبًا مُؤَجَّلًا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ  
الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَسَعَجَى  
الشُّكْرَيْنِ ۝ وَكَانَ مِنْ ثَمَرِ قِتْلٍ مَعَهُ رِثْيُونٌ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا  
أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا ۚ وَاللَّهُ يُجِبُ  
الصُّبْرَيْنِ ۝

*"Nor can a soul die except by Allah's leave, the term being fixed as by writing. If any do desire a reward in this life, we shall give it to him; and if any do desire a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give it to him. And swiftly shall We reward those that (serve us with) gratitude.*

*How many of the Prophets fought (in Allah's way), and with them (fought) large bands of godly men? But they never lost heart if they met with disaster in Allah's way, nor did they weaken (in will) nor give in. And Allah loves those who are firm and steadfast." (Qur'an 3: 145, 146)*

Those people who accepted the message of Muhammad (blessings and peace be unto him) did so with the certainty that success in this world and in the Hereafter was associated with it. What his tongue declared as truth was truth; what he described as non-truth was non-truth. They were cocksure that salvation was attainable by following the path shown by him, and that all other ways would lead people astray. This certainty was their true capital, and with this certainty as their weapon they opposed non-truth. Trials reached their highest point of severity but failed to make



a dent in the certainty of his followers. Non-truth employed all its force but could not compel them to bend before it. These followers were inspired by the grit and determination of the preceding generations of God's devotees, the adventures of their courage and sacrifice, the tales of their loyalty and steadfastness. And so, the followers of Muhammad (blessings and peace be unto him) staking everything of theirs for the sake of his message were still assailed by remorse that they had not done enough by way of loyalty.

## **VI. Migration takes place**

Thirteen years had passed after the initiation of the preaching by Muhammad (blessings and peace be unto him). Worshippers of God, with their injured bodies and wounded hearts, continued to bear witness to truth. They were victims of oppression; they were not oppressors. They had not usurped anybody's property, they had not ill-treated anyone, they had not dishonoured anyone, they had not harmed anyone. They were God's slaves; their only 'crime' was that they were declaring openly the fact of their being slaves of God, and they were inviting others to follow suit. Then God ordered them to part company with the oppressors. In response they left the city, every inch of which they loved. They loved its walls and houses, its mountains and ponds, its streets and by-lanes, its dust particles and wafts of wind. They

adopted a new town. They migrated, ill-equipped as they were, from the hallowed land of Makkah to Madinah Munawara. It was not an act of abandoning one's homeland; it was migration in the way of Allah; and so, it was hegira, in the right sense of the word. The new town extended a warm and enthusiastic welcome to them. The religion of God began to spread in their midst. The opponents could not bear this popularity and were beside themselves with anger. Attacks were made from all sides on this township. During this storm of opposition, volunteers were being trained to meet the need of upholding the cause of this religion of God. They passed through the furnace of trials and tribulations to come out as shining gold. Their bosoms were filled with the remembrance of God. Their faces bore prominently the signs of their servility to God. Their thoughts differed radically from the thoughts of others; their morals, from the morals of others; their character, from the character of others; and their activities, from those of others.

## **VII. Jihad was waged**

When a party of such exalted members was fully formed, then the Qur'an announced: Now the time has come to change the pace of history, to snatch the sword from the hand of the tyrant, to establish justice-oriented government. Now mentioning the name of God will no longer be a crime. Now His slaves will not be tortured.

Now they will not be forced to vacate their houses. Now they will not live in a state of fear and anxiety. Now, victimisation of truth will cease. Now, the task of lending support and success to the religion of truth will be completed. Arise and complete this task with your own hands. The world is watching, and God is ready to help.

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلُمُوا وَإِنَّ عَلَىٰ تَصَرُّفِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ۚ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ۚ

*"To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged; and verily, Allah is Most Powerful for their aid; - (They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, - (for no cause) except that they say, "Our Lord is Allah."*  
(Qur'an 22: 39,40)

Permission to raise their swords was given to those people who were 'monks' in the night and 'knights' during the day, who jumped into the fray to make God's proposition supreme and to offer their services to God's religion. Permission was given to put an end to the atrocities being perpetrated upon the weaker sections of the people, to terminate unjustifiable oppression and to grant man the right to freedom of worship, and to ensure that God's slaves should not be tortured simply because they were worshipping God and were desirous of spreading God's religion.

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أُهْلُهَا

وَاَجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ۚ وَاجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا

*"And why should ye not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? - Men, women, and children whose cry is: 'Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from Thee one who will protect; and raise for us from Thee one who will help!'"*  
(Qur'an 4:75)

In this way, in the land of Arabia was fought a battle which became a precursor to the greatest revolution of the world which changed the course of history for good. It would be totally erroneous to treat this battle in the same vein as other battles are assessed, because the despicable motives which have triggered other battles are conspicuously absent in this battle. This was a holy war, in the real sense of the term, and it was fought for the loftiest ideal. The world was familiar with the common motives of war - gaining wealth and affluence, securing rights, settling scores, conquering lands. It was not familiar with the motive of ensuring freedom of worship as a motive for war. It was not aware that a war could be fought for the establishment of God's religion, and that sacrifices could be made for the eradication of disbelief and polytheism, and for the elimination of mischief and terrorism. Now that battle with a difference was being fought. It was a battle by a holy man for a hallowed cause, between God's devotees and the votaries of Satan. In this battle, on the one side there were friends of God

and on the other, His enemies; on the one side there were champions of truth, and on the other, champions of falsehood; on the one side there were standard bearers of morality, and on the other, pedlars of vulgarity; on the one side, there were seekers after the Hereafter, and on the other, worldly seekers. God had given an assurance that His friends would triumph in this battle and His enemies would be routed. Consequently, God's promise was fulfilled and no earthly power could offer resistance.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ  
الْمَغَاوِرِ فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا

*"Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject faith fight in the cause of evil So fight ye against the friends of Satan: feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan."*

(Qur'an 4:76)

## VIII. Truth triumphs

In its own time, the weak sapling, that the preaching of truth was, managed to grow into a strong tree at a terrific speed. In the shade of the tree, many many people secured a 'pure life', peace and contentment, and the riches of devotion to truth and piety. The voice of truth which was first raised from the mountain range of Makkah began to be heard slowly and steadily throughout the Arabian peninsula. The era of persecution and trial was over; the era of power and rule began. The

condition of fear was gone and people achieved peaceful existence. The sway of falsehood was smashed and it became easy to live in accordance with the tenets of God's religion. The duty of the preaching of truth was completed in a period of twenty-three years at the hands of the Messenger of God (blessings and peace be unto him) and his revered companions. It is true that if this duty could be performed, it could be performed only by pious people devoted to God. When this job was completed, God's declaration about the perfection of religion and completion of favour was made. A pall of frustration finally spread over disbelief with regard to the religion of truth.

الْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ  
 أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

*"This day have those who reject faith have given up all hope of your religion: yet fear them not but fear Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."* (Qur'an 5:3)

Can there be a more prosperous and successful message for man than the message of return to God as given by Revered Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him)? Has history witnessed a pure and great revolution that was made through this message? This is a beacon of light. As long as the sun and the moon continue to be a part of the galactic movement and as

long as human existence survives on the planet of earth, preachers of Allah's religion and well-wishers of mankind will continue to draw inspiration, encouragement and guidance from it and they will continue their onward march to success.

## Chapter II

# II A: Main Components of the Act of Preaching

## A. The Preaching of Islam

### (i): Bearing Witness to the Religion of Truth

It is very clearly stated in the Qur'an that the Messengers of Allah perform the duty of bearing witness before mankind in this world. This means that they establish the truthfulness of Allah's religion before their respective nations with such clinching evidence that there remains no rational basis to refute it and consequently their brief is conclusively closed. In this sense, Allah's Messenger is described as Shaahid or Shaheed. (for Witness). For example,

وَنَرْعَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا فَقُلْنَا هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ فَعِلْهُمْ أَنَّ الْحَقَّ يَلِيهِ وَ  
صَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ

*"And from each people shall we draw a witness, and We shall say: "Produce your proof": then shall they know that the Truth is with Allah (alone), and the (lies) which they invented will leave them in the lurch."*

*(Qur'an 28:75)*

### (ii) The fate of the Nations is determined on the basis of this witnessing

The duty of bearing witness unto mankind is fully



performed in a community and the facts of the case are completely laid bare, then the fate of that community is decided. The supporters of Allah's Messengers are declared eligible to receive rewards and honours of God and on their opponents agrievous penalty is levied.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ رُسُلًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ فَجَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَأَتَقْنَا مِنَ  
الَّذِينَ أَجْرُمُوا ۚ وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

*"We did indeed send, before thee, Messengers to their (respective) peoples, and they came to them with clear signs: then, to those who transgressed, We meted out Retribution: and it was a duty incumbent upon Us to aid those who believed."*  
(Qur'an 30:47)

The fates of the nations will be decided on the Day of judgment too only on the basis of this act of witnessing.

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جُئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَ جُئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا ۝ يَوْمَئِذٍ  
يُؤَذُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَعَصَوُا الرَّسُولَ لَوْ تُسَوَّىٰ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ  
اللَّهُ حَدِيثًا

*"How then if We brought from each People a witness, and We brought thee as a witness against these People!*

*On that day those who reject faith and disobey the Messenger will wish that the earth were made one with them: But never will they hide a single fact from Allah!*

(Qur'an 4: 41,42)

Revered Abdullah bin Masood (Allah be pleased with him) narrates that seated on the pulpit, Allah's Messenger expressed his wish to hear the Qur'an from his

mouth. He wondered if he should recite the Qur'an when the Holy Book was revealed to the Prophet. (The Companion's suggestion was that the Prophet's recitation would be the best.) The Prophet explained that he wished to hear the recitation of the Qur'an from others too. So the revered Companion started reciting the fourth chapter of the Qur'an and when he reached the above quoted verses, then the Prophet asked him to stop the recitation. The Companion looked up and saw the Prophet shedding tears. [Sahih Bukhari, Kitabut Tafseer, Surah Nisa, and Kitab Fadailul Qur'an. Sahih Muslim, Chapter on prayers for travellers, chapter on the hearing of the Qur'an.]

These tears reflected on the one hand his deep appreciation of the onerous responsibility that he was expected to discharge and on the other his gravest fear of the fate of his community on the Day of judgment if it were to reject Islam.

### **(iii) Allah's Messenger left nothing to be desired in the preaching of Islam**

Allah gave the Messenger (blessings and peace be unto him) the responsibility of preaching Islam and he made it abundantly clear to the world that man is a slave of God and his salvation is dependent on his worship of and service to God. The worshipper of God will be successful and the rebel of God will be unsuccessful. God ordered the Messenger as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۚ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ  
رِسَالَتَهُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَخُصُّكَ مِنَ الْإِنْسَانِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

*"O Messenger! Proclaim the (Message) which has been sent to you from your Lord. If you did not, you would not have fulfilled and proclaimed His Mission. And Allah will defend you from men (who mean mischief), for Allah does not guide those who reject faith."* (Qur'an 5:67)

When this verse was revealed in Madinah, opposition to Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be unto him) was continuing intensely. On the one hand, this religion of God was passing through the concluding phase and on the other, the polytheists, the Jews, and the hypocrites were straining every nerve to ensure that this religion should have no chance of becoming dominant and supreme. With this end in mind, all sorts of strategies were being resorted to. The noble person of Allah's Messenger was the main target of their hostility and even the plot to assassinate him was being hatched. In these perilous circumstances, he was being instructed that he should present Islam in toto and without alterations. If even one order or one instruction remained undelivered to the people, the mission of Prophethood would become flawed and incomplete and one can conclude that the whole message of God did not reach the people. So, the Prophet was instructed to carry on his duty of preaching and proclaiming oblivious of all fear and risk, irrespective of its impact on the beliefs, rituals, customs,

laws of survival, character and temperament of the people and irrespective of the hostile plans being made against him. Allah will protect him and the enemies could do no harm to him.

Records tell us that the conditions were so serious that his revered companions used to guard and protect him during the night. When the above-quoted verse was revealed, the Prophet came out of his tent and advised his guarding companions to go back to their places as Allah had taken upon Himself the responsibility of protecting him. (Tafseer Ibne Kathir: 2/89)

#### **(iv) The responsibility of preaching allotted to the Muslim Community**

The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) delivered Allah's message without any change to the people. Then he departed from the world. The message which he received from God remains intact and will so remain till the Day of Judgment. Now it is the duty of those who subscribe to this faith to present it before the people throughout the world. If they perform this duty, then they will be considered favourites of God; if they have forgotten this duty, then nothing can save them from God's reckoning. The holy Qur'an has made it clear that the responsibility of being witnesses to God will devolve upon his community after Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) and it will have to carry on that

work which Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) did. Just as he bore witness to Allah's message before his own community, his community will have to bear witness before others.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَ يُكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

*"Thus have We made of you an Ummat justly balanced. That ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves."*

(Qur'an 2:143)

This implies that the destiny of other nations is linked to this community; by performing the duty of bearing witness to this religion, it will provide the resource of guidance. By doing so, it will discharge its responsibility and will merit unlimited recompense and reward from God. If it shirks this responsibility, it will be held accountable for the loss of guidance sustained by the world, and it is feared that the accountability might turn out to be extremely severe. It is a matter of regret that the community has forgotten its responsibility and may not be aware of this forgetfulness.

On one occasion Allah's Messenger remarked about this community:

أَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ

*"All of you are Allah's witnesses on this earth."*

[Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Janaiz: chapter prophet's tribute to the dead. Sahih Muslim Kitabul Janaiz.]

This remark is a declaration that this community is divinely ordained to bear witness to truth; this is the responsibility of this community alone in this world, and only this community is in a position to explain to the people which way leads to God and which way distances man from God; what is truth and what is its negation; who has taken to the Straight Path and who is pursuing the path of evil. This community is the custodian of God's religion, because the last Prophet of God has bequeathed the religion of God to this community. Today, no other group has in its possession the religion of God except this community. So it is the bounden duty of this community to deliver this religion to others. If it fails to do so, then this work cannot be done by anyone else in this world. This was what Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) said when the Makkan polytheists gathered on the battlefield of Badr with the intention of wiping out this community;

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنْ تَهْلِكْ هَذِهِ الْعَصَابَةُ مِنْ اَهْلِ الْاِسْلَامِ لَا تُعْبَدُ فِي  
الْاَرْضِ-

*O Allah! If this group of the followers of Islam were to be liquidated, then you will not be worshipped on the face of the earth.*

*[Muslim; Kitabul Jihad wa Siyar, chapter on help through angels during the Battle of Badr]*

On the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, a declaration had been made about the perfection of

religion and Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) was delivering a sermon in which he said:

لَعَلِّي لَا أَلْقَاكُمْ بَعْدَ عَامِي هَذَا الْاَهْل بَلَّغْتُ

*"It is most probable that I may not meet you all after this year."*

After predicting in this way, he asked his companions,

الاهل بَلَّغْتُ

*"Have I conveyed (the message of God) to you?"*

with one voice they answered in the affirmative. Then he asked them,

أَنْتُمْ تُسْأَلُونَ عَنِّي فَمَا أَنْتُمْ قَائِلُونَ

*"You will be questioned about me on (the Day of Judgment); then what reply will you give?"*

They replied,

نَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ قَدْ فَادَيْتَ وَنَصَحْتَ

*"We will bear testimony that you conveyed the message perfectly, you delivered the message in full and you were extremely sincere in ensuring our welfare." [Bukhari and Muslim]*

Then he lifted his holy forefinger towards the sky and repeated this statement three times:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اشْهَدْ

*"O Allah! Note this testimony."*

What he meant was that God's people were

acknowledging that in his delivering of God's message there was no shortcoming and the message was conveyed to them in the same form as it was received. Then he addressed the gathering,

الْأَفْلَيْلِغَ الشَّاهِدُ الْغَائِبِ

*"It is imperative that those who are present here should make it a point to convey (the contents of my sermon) to those who are absent."*

Revered Abdullah ibne Abbas (Allah be pleased with them) comments on this advice in these words,

فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ إِنَّهَا لَوَصِيَّتُهُ إِلَى أُمَّتِهِ

*"I swear by Allah who has full control over my life that this was the last will and testament of the Prophet!"*  
(Bukhari Kitabul Haj, chapter Mina sermon)

Rabi bin Anas (a follower of the companions) says,

حق على من اتبع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ان يدعو  
كالذي دعا وان ينذر بالذي انذر

*"He who follows Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) has this obligation to adopt the Prophet's strategy in the preaching of Islam and to employ the same scripture for the purpose of warning the people about God's punishment which the Prophet made use of." [Tafseer Ibne Kathir, 2/226]*

These excerpts clearly establish that the Muslims have to live by and pass on the religion of God received through Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) to others. They will be absolved of the responsibility in



God's eyes only when they leave the world after they have conveyed the message to God's people. At present they alone have the religion of truth in their possession. If they do not bear witness to it, the world will remain deprived of it and the burden of this privation will have to be borne by them. In this case, on the Day of Judgment, God would ask the people about the Muslims, "These Muslims had my revealed religion with them and they were upholding my religion. Did they inform you about it or not?" Then on account of the indifference shown by the Muslims, the people would reply, "O God! The upholders of your religion were uninterested and they allowed us to remain in darkness. They did not wish us well and they did not convey your religion to us." This reply would be totally correct, and prove the allegation that the Muslims ruined the human beings, and their culpability cannot be covered up. What would then come to the rescue of the Muslims? They are not aware how serious their culpability is. Otherwise they would become sleepless and restless.

It is a fact that Allah wants this work of guiding the benighted humanity to be done by everyone who claims to be a loyalist of God. After embracing Islam, it is my and your duty of a permanent nature to convey it to others. The feeling that man who is expected to be subservient to God's guidance is moving about with supreme indifference to it must keep us on tenterhooks

day in, day out. This work can be done flawlessly only when it is done in accordance with the way the Prophets did it. For this the same sincerity, the same affection, and the same angst which the messengers of God possessed would be required. This should assume the status of one life's dedication and of the main objective of our endeavours. At present the world is passing through its darkest period. Let us fill it with the light of God. But this work is not to be done during the hours of leisure. Instead, it demands both full time and full attention. For the sake of this work we should give up other work this work should not be abandoned. It is a fact that what importance we attach to a certain work determines its appropriate place in one's life. If this work of preaching tops the list of our priorities, it means we are conscious of its significance. If other engagements crowd this work out and we are not able to spare time for it, it proves that in our eyes this work is by no means important, even though orally we may acknowledge its importance a thousand times. This work will be done only when we love it and hold it dear. We have to look upon the time spent on it as the justification of our existence; we should never view it as an unnecessary burden loaded upon us. Instead, the execution of this work should bring us a sense of tranquillity and relief.

You are aware that for the job you have before you God selected only those righteous and exalted people

whom we call Prophets and Messengers in every epoch. These righteous people of God had a special relationship with Him and they were quite dear to Him, they loved Him and He loved them. They wholly staked their lives in this job of preaching, bore caustic remarks, heard abuses, gave up ease and comfort, endured most severe hardships, lost their hearths and homes, and sometimes faced even violent deaths. Nevertheless, Allah continued this job through them. Who tolerates that their loved ones should undergo difficulties? If Allah had willed, He would have prevented His beloved people from the task of preaching or would have preserved them from hardships and difficulties. But He willed that these sincere and dedicated devotees should persist with this lifelong mission and persist against all odds. The history of the Prophets indicates that their sincere companions and successors trod this path of thorns and thistles and continued to tread making unprecedented sacrifices. As long as there was life in their bodies, neither their venture ended nor did they get distracted.

This strategy of God with regard to His own Messengers and their successors indicates that for this mission of preaching the most elitist and exalted members of the human species were obliged to bear difficulties, and the most precious lives could be sacrificed at its altar, but the job could not be left unattended. One has to ponder how sublime the vocation

should have been to which these hallowed and sinless lives remained dedicated as though for them nothing else counted as vocation.

So magnificent is this job. You propose to do this great job today. If you have to lose whatever you possess in this job, let it go. If you have to stake your very life, stake it. It is not going to be a bargain of loss. Indeed, it is a bargain that will make you proud tomorrow, and you are going to achieve that success which will be the envy of many of those who look upon you as a tomfool today and for whom the job of preaching is without justification in the present circumstances.

#### **(v) The Scope of Preaching is vast**

The job of preaching is not a limited job. Instead it has a very wide scope, so wide indeed that as long as you can be proactive and your life gives you space for action you will never complain of the paucity of work. Every other ideology in this world provides its volunteers with small target groups. It instructs them to penetrate into the groups of either labourers or capitalists, to address the commoners or the upper classes, to make an appeal to the backward classes or creamy layers of society. This in itself is a proof that the survival of these ideologies is solely dependent on these little groups in whose midst the volunteers have to work. If these groups are not there, then these ideologies cease to be relevant. So, it is a

common phenomenon that when these target groups are dismantled, a sort of stupor spreads over the volunteers as though there was no life left in them or as though no activity was possible in this wide world. But the volunteers of Islam are entrusted with an interminable work. Their work is not a part-time work, it cannot be completed during a particular period, after which they can relax; instead, all the time that they have or own is insufficient for the job on hand. Every follower of Islam is a preacher and has to call others towards Islam. He has to convey this message to all those to whom it has not been conveyed. This work does not allow him to sit idle. If one group accepts this message, at once another group becomes a target group. The job that he has initiated is going to keep him engaged throughout his life. Anyone who is earnest in doing this job will find work all around him, in every class of people, and at all times. With such enormous work cut out for him, he will not face an inane question like what he has to do or where he has to spend his energies.

In the present era, the wide-ranging work of preaching that the volunteers of Islam are expected to shoulder can be classified under three headings:

- 1) Calling and preaching;
- 2) Reform and training;
- 3) The triumph and establishment of Islam. The elaboration of these topics is as follows:

## **(Va) Calling and Preaching**

The first duty of the followers of Islam is to present Islam in such a way that the non-Muslim world sees its most genuine version, and to elucidate it from every angle to such an extent that it becomes the most visible reality of the times. Then no man can keep away from Islam on the ground that he is not familiar with it. This is a long - drawn affair. For this all those human beings ignorant of Islam constitute the target group. The search for this group is not like search for the Holy Grail. The target group is available in large numbers before your eyes. When you step out from your house with this message, you will realize that there is eager expectancy for you in the east and the west, in the north and the south. Members of your target group appear before you in droves. Just think! Does any other ideology have such a daunting job?

During the course of this missionary work, you may have to confront both most modern theories and thoughts of yesteryear, of both traditionalists and non-conformists, both conventionalists and liberal thinkers - Everyone lives sustained by some belief or theory. You have to prove that such sustenance is weak and that success and salvation can be found only in the religion of God. To do so you have to comprehend fully both Islam and anti-Islamic doctrines and then to look for that approach which will enable you to establish the supremacy of

Islam. This task is too splendid to be described in words. Every other work in this world may make a man think that after completing it he would have enough time to spare but with regard to the job of preaching, even after securing outstanding success, one is left with the feeling of under-achievement. Even if a most talented man with the longest span of life is engaged in this task to the last breath of his life, it goes without saying that his task will remain unfinished. When you are busy with this job of preaching and calling the attention of the people to God's religion, another vista will open before you. This vista will be provided by those fortunate people who through your impressive mission of preaching accept the truth of Islam. It is obvious that it is not a child's play to accept truth in an environment dominated by falsehood. It is like offering oneself to trials. So, the preachers of Islam have to endeavour to remove the difficulties that the neophytes encounter. When God's people abandon their pet beliefs for the sake of God's religion, forsake their cultural and social ties, with which they had lived, disown the legacy of the past which had given them a sense of pride, and give up on those friends and relatives living without whom was unthinkable, and migrate from those geophysical environs with whose dust particles they had sentimental attachment, it will be a trying time for the servitors of Islam too. Allah will see who embrace the neophytes and who move away, in spite of the loud

declaration of faith in Islam, from them. In a social set-up in which man grows, many of his problems get solved on their own and many other problems require a little attention for their solution. But the moment he moves out of that set-up, he is devastated by the feeling that it is no longer easy for him to solve his problems. The neophyte facing critical conditions deserves your most generous cooperation. The demand of your relationship with and love for God's religion is that you should not leave him in the lurch, and should not allow a sense of being a stranger in the new set-up to grow in him. When he had given up his all for the sake of God's religion, you need not sacrifice everything; at least a part (of your wealth) may be willingly given to him. When he is frightened of his problems, take them from him and add them to the list of your problems. Rehabilitating a person in a new social set-up is a long-drawn and laborious process. In the presence of such a process, how can a preacher of Islam imagine that his job is either limited or dead easy?

### **(Vb) Reform and Training**

The second important work of the volunteers of the faith is that they should take upon themselves the responsibility of reforming and training the Ummah to which they belong and whose members they are. They have to eliminate its intellectual, practical, ethical, social and cultural deficiencies. This job is multi-dimensional.



One important dimension is that awareness should be created in this community with regard to the responsibility of the preaching of religion that it has to discharge and inculcate those qualities which that responsibility entails and practically orient the community towards that job.

One special dimension in particular needs emphasis here. And that is, for the preaching of Islam among non-Muslims to be successful, the reform of Muslims is a must because it is not easy to present Islam divorced from its followers. If Islam is truly reflected in the lives of the Muslims, many new avenues that are at present closed will be opened up for the job of inviting people to Islam and preaching to them. It is also possible that, from the midst of people known for their rebellious and hostile attitude towards Islam, sincere volunteers for Islam may emerge. It is true that Islam has been revealed to the world as a religion of God and it is in this capacity that it will survive to the end of the world. This status will not change whether any group of human beings accepts it or rejects it, and whether it abides by it or abandons it. Any one who wants to understand Islam has to do so from the angle of its status. Unfortunately, people in general do not view Islam as the religion of God but as the religion of Muslims and as Muslims look upon Islam as true, the people in general do not see Islam as something distinct from the lives of the Muslims and they see every act of

the Muslims as something in accordance with the instructions of Islam. In their eyes the authentic version of Islam is not what obtains in the Qur'an and the Sunnah but what Muslims present through their praxis. This perspective of theirs is undoubtedly erroneous but they cannot be unduly blamed for it because the people who assess the merits and defects of an ideology on a purely intellectual and objective basis are very few. A majority of the people look towards those persons who are its putative followers without bothering to ascertain whether their activities are in sync with or in violation of the ideology. On certain occasions the followers of an ideology may commit some acts with which their ideology may not have anything to do, and for which there may be other factors. As it is, there is no gainsaying the fact that the world is mostly enamoured of the practice of seeing things superficially. People do not seek to identify the factors triggering those acts; instead, they project the merits and defects of a community as though they are derived from the ideology in which it claims to have faith.

On the one hand, the non-Muslim world identifies the Muslim behaviour with the Islamic behaviour, and on the other, there is a yawning gulf between a majority of Muslims and Islam. It may be more true to say that the majority is not acquainted with the authentic version of Islam. The majority cannot answer the following

questions: What is the meaning of believing in God? What are the implications of this belief? What is "Shirk"? What is Tauheed? What is Kufr? What is Iman? Where does disobedience begin? Why is obedience to the Prophet compulsory? Why should one avoid disobeying the Prophet? They were expected to worship one God but the majority considered worship too great a burden to bear. They were exhorted to keep off every foolish thing but the majority preferred to impose innumerable, and wrong rituals upon itself. Instead of the truth being followed, falsehood is being followed. Instead of obeying the Prophet (May Allah bless and greet him) in every matter, others are being obeyed proudly. The distinction between right and wrong is absent in their dealings. Their social structure has begun to decay. Non-Islamic features have made inroads into their civilization. To make matters worse, there are not a few Muslims who openly indulge in polytheistic practices and do not consider them to be anti-monotheistic in the least. There is rebellion against God at every step in their lives; yet they do not realize that this strikes at the root of their religion and faith. They show love not to Allah and His Prophet but to their enemies. Their energies are spent not in the way of Islam but in promoting non-Islam. Leaving Muslims in this unsatisfactory spiritual state, we cannot expect desirable results by giving a call of faith to non-Muslims. They can have a fair idea of Islam and the call of faith

can produce results only when at least a prominent group with certain features comes into existence. Those features are as follows: It should represent Islam by word and deed; it should obey God in every matter; its morality should be truly Islamic; its dealings must be in accordance with God's orders; Islam must rule over its social structure; it should seek nobody else's approval, except God's approval.

Only when such a group comes into existence, it will be possible for the world to see what type of men Islam produces and how their character is refined. As long as such a noble group, the salt of the earth, is not available, the world will have to make do with the common Muslims and their present pattern of behaviour, it may be safely assumed, will not assist the spread of Islam. Some may doubtfully ask: Will the emergence of such a noble group lead to its recognition as the true mouthpiece of Islam? Will that group command such clout that the world will focus its attention upon it alone in order to understand Islam? Will the world turn its attention away from the common Muslims' behaviour on the ground that it is unrepresentative of Islam? The answer is assertively in the affirmative. Let it not surprise anyone. It will be easy for the world to decide who represents Islam truly and who does not if a group living up to the teachings of Islam is available. I may go a step further and assert that when there is a group practising Islamic teachings and

preaching about them, then the world will not go to any other group in the matter of Islam. An ideologue is automatically a spokesman and so the world will not seek authentic interpretation of an ideology from another person who does not attach any value to it. If the genuine servitors of Islam are available, then the world will deprive all those people of the right to speak on behalf of Islam who pay lip sympathy only to Islam and who excuse themselves from following it.

The formation of a representative Muslim group does not exclude the agenda of reforming the generality of Muslims. As a matter of fact, the most immediate and attainable target is the general reform of the Muslims. Without it, the spread of Islam is an uphill task. In fact, you have to reform the whole Muslim community, to raise it to the status of a living exegesis of Islam, and to bear witness to the truth of God's religion. It is not the job of one particular group of Muslims but the responsibility of an entire community to call the world to the faith of Islam. This responsibility cannot be adequately discharged without the whole community becoming aware of it.

It may be no wonder if God's people rush in droves to welcome Islam when this community arises with this determination to convey Islam to them. It is the inherent tendency of Islam to spread. It is so much in tune with human nature that to oppose Islam man has to wage a

war with his own nature. No other ideology is so much in harmony with human nature as Islam. Therefore the possibilities of the spread of Islam are greater than those of the spread of other ideologies. That is why whenever the spread of Islam took place, it spread irresistibly on a massive scale covering whole countries and large populations. Such a phenomenon took place when its volunteers gave top priority to it and worked for it with the single-mindedness of purpose as though they were born only for this work. God has so ordained that no ideology spreads here by waving a magic wand. Hard labour is required from those who espouse the ideology. If this labour is undertaken in order to save people from God's punishment and to subordinate them to God's religion, a soul-stirring scenario can present itself before our very eyes when, on the one hand, this ummah is restless to save God's people from punishment and, on the other, the target groups are restless to escape from the feared punishment.

### **(Vc) The Triumph and Establishment of Islam**

The third dimension of the call of faith is that we should try to make Islam triumphant, because without this triumph of Islam the holistic practice of Islam is not possible. Islam is not a hypothetical religion, unrelated to ourselves and our problems. Instead it builds the human

personality in a special way. It does not provide a lifeless doctrinal base; instead, it furnishes a think-tank that channelises a well-defined pattern of behaviour. Acceptance of Islam should not be confined to the tongue and the heart and excluded from the whole gamut of existence and one's conduct. It implies that a Muslim should be overwhelmed with the feelings of servility to God, there should be no other object of worship, there should be exclusive devotion to Him, and His absolute authority should be acknowledged in every walk of life, in morals and customs, in science and technology, in civilization and sociology, in governance and politics. His will alone should regulate every activity. Summing up, one can say that man should totally surrender to God and renounce his autonomy fully in favour of God's will. Obedience to God on such a massive scale demands universal domination of God's religion and rule. Assuredly, non-Islamic forces will dominate the areas of theory and practice when Islam is divested of its power. In such a situation you will have cordial rapport with God but you will not be able to establish total conformity to God's religion in practice. When God's religion is subordinated and forces hostile to it have an upper hand, then you may be allowed to remember God, to express your attachment to Him, to glorify and praise Him, but in public and collective life, you can practise religion as much as the hostile forces permit you to practise. Before

you gloat over this permission or secure that permission, do not forget that such a permission will be terribly restricted, and given to the extent that it does not pose a danger to the continuity of the domination of the hostile forces. When they suspect some hindrance would crop up on the way, even the limited concession would be withdrawn. The grant of limited freedom is not due to some sympathy for you or your religion; it is due to the impression that a little freedom in a limited area is not harmful when Islam has been rendered immobile and ineffective at different fronts of life. Outside the limited area, you will be obliged to conform to the culture and ethics, the principles of politics, the trade practices, the industrial regulations, the international rules followed by the hostile forces. On certain occasions you will not have even the right to say that a particular legislation is clearly anti-Islamic. Every dominant force abides by this policy and, by means of it, ensures its survival. A person who loves God's religion cannot make a compromise with this policy, cannot rest content with restrictions upon Islam and will throw off this yoke upon Islam at all costs, even at the cost his life, If necessary. If he does not get opportunities to practise Islam, he will be eager to secure them. Without them he will be like a fish out of water. This restlessness is natural; its absence proves that Islam has not secured a spot in his heart.

Islam proposes to encompass your whole life and



non-Islamic forces permit you to observe Islamic precepts in a few matters only. If you are satisfied with that limited permission, it means you do not want to impose complete Islam on yourself. A true follower of Islam will feel uneasy with this state of affairs. The absence of this uneasiness indicates a certain insensitivity which may result in a spiritual death. The best longing and the earnest endeavour of a lover of Islam will be to abide by Islamic law, to make his culture Islamic, to eliminate un-Islamic elements from his social set-up, to make his transactions Islamic, to bring his politics under Islamic control. To fulfil this longing and make the endeavour result-oriented, we should draw the attention of the people towards Islam and endeavour single-mindedly for it. Islam cannot become supreme without this. The dominant role of Islam can be achieved when the world pays attention to it and its scope becomes wider and wider. If the world has not turned its attention towards it, the question of Islamic domination and rule does not arise.

Some are of the opinion that if a pious Muslim, desirous of God's rule on earth, assumes reins of government, then Islam will automatically dominate the domain of his power. This opinion is not correct. The domination of Islam is not the same as the rule by a Muslim; it is the domination of the Islamic law, it should occupy the highest position, its arbitration should be

final. This is not possible if a Muslim assumes power or a ruler converts to Islam; this is possible only when a whole community is prepared to give Islam that status it deserves or when there is a powerful group competent to establish Islam. This work cannot be done by an individual however eminent he might be in the world. This work urgently requires a missionary call, a sustained missionary enterprise in ordinary circumstances. Such a call will strengthen the resolve to make Islam dominant and form a frame of mind that will reject every other way of life and legal system except Islam.

It may be admitted or ought to be admitted that if a great leader converts to Islam or becomes a standard-bearer of Islam, he will be of great assistance in the attempt to call people towards Islam and, in certain circumstances, he will facilitate the domination of Islam. Conversion of or championing by a great man, per se, cannot be sufficient for the domination of Islam. For this to be realized, he and like-minded people will have to resort to organized missionary work until a following is built up which will function as a volunteer corps in the process of implementing Islam and making it a live force for human welfare.

There will be conditions, both hostile and facilitating, during the process of empowering Islam. Two points have to be noted: One, hostile conditions will not change automatically into favourable conditions,

sustained endeavours will be needed; two, favourable conditons do not bring domination automatically to an ideology; such conditions will have to be made use of for its domination. Islam also may get such favourable conditions but they do not guarantee Islam's automatic progress to power. Volunteers are needed who keep a watch on favourable conditions and seize them to promote Islam. Such volunteers are secured only through the call to faith and there is no other way to secure them.

During the struggle to make Islam dominant, you may be obliged to involve yourself in the political arena in particular. At present several political ideologies are active in the world. Each one of them is advocating a particular viewpoint regarding human achievement and offers a fixed solution to problems faced politically, economically, socially and culturally. These ideologies are devoid of elan vital in them and do not possess a strong base and survive with the help of mere conjectures and superficial slogans. In contrast, Islam presents a sublime concept of human achievement. It might be supremely imperative to make a comprehensive revaluation of the non-Islamic ideologies until their deficiencies become transparent. Simultaneously, the Islamic concept of achievement should be so presented as to convince every reasonable person of its clear superiority. This will be your service in the field of ideology. Your practical work includes the following:

Organize all those who see eye to eye with you on the value-system you preach; train them to look upon contemporary political theories with mental reservations in loving preference for Islam; and, persuade them to stake their all at the altar of Islam's predominance. In addition, adopt all those strategies, permitted by Islam, which are necessary for the triumph of Islam with the cooperation of the trained volunteers.

When you endeavour according to the recommended plan, the object of your yearning can be secured. That is, falsehood will be routed, and Islam will prevail. Man will be emancipated from the yoke of non-God, and God's legislation for justice will universally and effectively come into force. The rejection of God's religion is not always the case in this world. On several occasions nations and countries have embraced it and subordinated themselves to it. The most prominent example of this is the great revolution that Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) brought about through his preaching. God, who helped Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) and his companions, is alive even today, and will live for ever. Arise, and perform your duty, for God is with you. If God wills, all the forces of the heavens and the earth will rush to help you. Moreover, what seems remote may emerge before your eyes with the speed beyond your wildest imagination.



## **II B. Conveying the Message and following it**

### **i. Relationship between Conveying and following the Message**

On the face of it, following Islam is one thing and conveying it to others is another because one relates to one's self and the other extends to what is beyond one's own self. Nevertheless both are deeply inter-related and so they are inseparable. It is not possible to think of one without the other. The task of following Islam reaches its perfection when one conveys Islam to others; similarly, one cannot convey Islam without practising it. One has to internalize the religion and make it pervasive upon one's self before one embarks upon conveying it to other human beings. If the truth of his religion remains hidden from a person and is not reflected in his activity, it will be beyond him to reveal it to others. He is the first addressee of the religion which he proposes to convey to the world. He has to make a beginning with himself before he reaches out to others; he has to transform himself into a worshipper of God before he transforms others - It will be a farce to call upon others to follow Islam without following it himself, and a farcical

message is devoid of the power of attraction. That religion wins hearts whose preachers are its proactive embodiments.

## ii. The success of the task of calling men to Islam depends on the task of following it

Mere proclamation of the veracity of Islam is not 'dawah'. In its ethos, it is a great revolutionary effort. Islam does not grant parity to man - modified religions. Man has to initiate this effort inside before seeking to do so in the external world. That is, he should submit to God first before asking others to do so. Otherwise no one will pay heed to such a call until the Doomsday. The perennial ideal before a preacher is to please God. If the preacher preaches Islam to others and his own life is devoid of the impact of religion, then this state of affairs causes extreme displeasure to God.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ۚ كَبِيرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ  
تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

*"O ye who believe! Why say ye that which ye do not?  
Grievously hateful is it in the sight of Allah that ye say  
that which ye do not."* (Qur'an 61:2,3)

Addressing the orators and preachers of the people of the Book, the Qur'an says:

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

*"Do ye enjoin right conduct on the people, and forget (to*

*practise it yourselves, and yet ye study the Scripture?  
Will ye not understand?"* (Qur'an 2:44)

The Arabic word, 'Al-birr', translated here as 'right conduct' has a much vaster connotation as it encompasses all rights pertaining to God and human beings. The idea may be paraphrased thus: you preachers exhort people to uphold ideals like worship of God, the rights of relatives and kinsmen, excellence in ethics and morals, honesty, trust and fairness in commercial dealings, and sincerity, goodwill and compassion in interpersonal relationships. But your own conduct is empty of these ideals. You wax eloquent on the subject of religion and its virtues but in your own lives these virtues are absent. You quote and expound the scripture and, by doing so, make your lectures brilliant but you forget that the scripture is meant not merely for expounding but also for internalising.

The moral inherent in it is that the people of the faith should not have one image for the public and another in private. Worship of God is totally negated if one kindles the lamp of guidance for others and opts for darkness for himself.

### **iii. The preacher has to be far more committed to the message than others**

It is true that a good fate in this world and in the Hereafter awaits that person who accepts Islam and bows before God. Nothing can ward off the evil fate that



awaits the person who rejects Islam and chooses to disobey God. The preacher of Islam has to make the world aware of this truth. If he believes this and his heart bears witness to its truth, then he has to follow Islam with greater commitment than others. When he announces loud and clear that the best canon for life is what God has revealed through His Messenger, and at the same time acts in contravention of that canon, then he puts his conviction to shame before God and mankind.

**(iv) The preacher will be questioned on the hiatus between precept and practice**

The preaching of Islam is undoubtedly such a meritorious enterprise that it will fetch rewards from God on a scale hard to imagine. Nevertheless, mere engagement in that noble enterprise does not exempt a person from God's strictures. Inevitably there will be a query with regard to the quantum of precept reflected in practice. Today, if the preacher's life is devoid of the precepts of his religion, he will be charge-sheeted by the angels tomorrow. They will report to God about his enthusiasm for theory and indifference in practice. This is no ordinary offence. According to Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him), the lips of such a preacher will be cut with the scissors made of fire. Following Islam will make a man successful and ignoring it will not bring success in this world and in the next.

Mercy of God is extended to those who are loyal to Him; without demonstrating that loyalty, how can one hope for mercy?

A voluntary servant of Islam should bear in mind that, in spite of his best efforts, if his countrymen, local people, relatives, even parents, brothers, sisters, spouse, children, all of them reject Islam and he is not able to convert a single person to Islam, he will not be held guilty. After all, he has exerted himself to the utmost in guiding people. Beyond that, he has not been empowered to change hearts. He is not to be blamed for not bringing about a change of heart. But he will not be excused for ignoring divine guidance in his personal life, because if he sincerely proposes to mould his personality for submission to God, it is within his powers to do so. There is no obstacle on the way which he cannot remove. God has granted him full powers over his own self. If he does not impose the rule of God over himself, he has no excuse left for self-defence. By putting the blame on someone else, he cannot avoid the consequence. He will have to face the punishment which will be too frightening and too devastating.

#### **(v) Conformity strengthens closeness to God**

A sincere, sober and determined volunteer of Islam is duty-bound to establish proximity to God which is necessary to serve the cause of religion. This proximity is

obtained by conformity to the edicts of the religion he proposes to serve. There is no other way. God's Messengers surpass other members of their respective communities in the matter of preaching. Their closeness to God is marked by the fact that their hearts are ever brimming with God's remembrance. Their relationship with Allah is interminable. Worship and services to God encompass their lives entirely and so no sphere of activity remains independent. They remain embodiments of servility and joyous resignation to His will. They not only proclaim their message but also follow it with total dedication to the extent that their denigrators do not muster courage to accuse them of duplicity in their mission. They cling to the dictates of the religion with tenacity in the most trying circumstances of their lives. The Qur'an testifies that they are endowed with qualities like awe, piety, religiosity, fear, submissiveness, and constant contrition and recurrent turning towards Allah. These attributes do not merely delineate their personalities but also indicate that the preachers cannot do without them.

#### **(vi) Conformity enhances competence**

The propagation of Islam is a more difficult task than that of any other ideology. Other ideologies and movements address themselves to the reform of external human features and the solution of a few problems,

whereas Islam brings about a total revolution in both the social and the spiritual realms of man and offers a new perspective on and dimension to the whole life of man, quite distinct from those of other ideologies. To render service to Islam, its volunteer has to more determined, more steadfast, more sacrificing, more intelligent than the follower or leader of other ideologies. Genuine service to Islam is not possible without these qualities. The greater the proximity to God, the greater the power of these attributes, and the greater the proficiency of the servant of Islam. Relationship with God should be so strong that severance of other relationships should pose no problem. Remembrance of God should be so absorbing that other worldly things lose their distracting power. Love and fear of God should pervade the entire being to the exclusion of other fears and loves. When such a stage is reached, no power on earth can mislead and the servant of Islam will give a better account of himself than any other similarly qualified servant of any other ideology or movement.

**(vii) Sans conformity, definitiveness of an argument is not possible**

Messengers of God present their message in such a way as to leave no room for refutation. To carry on their work, one has to be endowed with zeal for conformity that characterised them. Action without this zeal robs the message of its persuasiveness. Therefore, a person, not

proactive towards the message, cannot convincingly present the case of God's religion before humanity. Actions speak louder than words. That person becomes a hindrance in the acceptability of a religion who preaches without practising what he preaches. His hypocrisy is a sufficient evidence for the rejection of his mission. The world will not forgive the most trivial lapses of a preacher of Islam and will hold these lapses responsible for the vitiation of the message and will tarnish his reputation. Popularity of a message is determined by the messenger's dedication to it in his own life and by the absence of a mismatch between word and deed.

It is most essential that the preacher's whole existence should testify to the truth of Islam. If this is not done, mere verbal communication cannot galvanise another man's life. Propagation without practical demonstration has devalued God's religion. It is a point to ponder that many look upon Islam as a mere topic for an engaging conversation and that Islam has no space in many lives. Mere lip service is an insult to Islam. At least, active preachers can ill-afford to do so.

## **II C. The Sequence of Preaching and Reform<sup>1</sup>**

### **i. Preaching is an endeavour to reform**

The preaching of Islam, viewed from one angle, is an attempt to reform attitude and action. And so, it may be described as an endeavour to reform. It includes the reform of spouse and children, family and tribe, town and city, country and the world, and the whole humankind. We have to reform those Muslims who are either unfamiliar with the teachings of Islam or unprepared to act in accordance with them; we have to reform those people whose ignorance of Islam is total and who for various reasons keep away from Islam and do not want to accept it. Every one of us has a role to play in this multidimensional enterprise but in an orderly manner. This orderliness will ensure decorum and durability and a natural rate of progress. Otherwise man would reach the first stage in the arena belatedly and he would start exerting himself at a stage where his efforts are expected

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(1) Inviting to Islam is a task comprising two different categories Dawah and Tabligh among Non-Muslims and Reform and Training for Muslims. They are dealt with simultaneously here for convenience. The difference between the two categories is obvious though the missionary has to address them both.

much later. Disorderliness will make the whole enterprise topsy-turvy and it is a grave and distorting defect. The attempt at reform and preaching should be free from this defect. A detailed discussion about orderliness follows, throwing light upon its importance and benefits.

## (ii) Reform of Wife and Children

Like charity, reform should begin at home. If religion is not treated as obsolete and trivial and is treated with the importance due to it, then your wife and children deserve top priority in the task of explaining the truth about religion and warning about the dire consequences of deviation and disregard. A person aware of the necessity of following religious dictates will naturally create that awareness in his wife and children. He cannot like it that he escapes from the punishment in the Hereafter whereas he allows his wife and children to be caught in it.

The task of reforming wife and children and making them actively religious is mandatory and not optional or merely preferable. God orders:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

*"O ye who believe! Save yourselves and your families from Fire."*

(Qur'an 66:6)

The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) says,

الرجل راعٍ على أهل بيته وهو مسئول عن رعيتِهِ

*"Man is in charge of the members of his family and he is accountable (on the Day of Judgment) on their behalf."*

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitabun Nikah & other places; Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Imarat, chapter on the greatness of a just leader.)

The first condition for the preaching of Islam or any attempt at reform to be fruitful is that there should be sincerity and affection without which no addressee can be influenced. This condition of love makes the head of the family most suitable for the reform of wife and children. He loves them very much, he is their genuine well-wisher, he serves them dutifully, he guards and nurtures them, he bears their sorrows, he makes sacrifices for them. They in their turn are convinced about his love and affection and are obliged to treat him as their well-wisher and benefactor. It is therefore reasonable to hope that, if he preaches the religion to them or tries to reform them, they will look upon him as a source of welfare and will be more easily influenced by him than by anybody else.

You are empowered to some extent by God with regard to the reforming of wife and children. You can be harsh within the limits. If you find them transgressing the limits of Shariah, first use gentleness and reasonable explanation to reform them. If they still persist in their old ways, you have to be harsh and to force them to abide by the religious regulations. You have to make it clear that deviation from or disobedience of faith cannot be



tolerated.

This empowerment has put you to a severe test. You can not remain silent or be content with advice to the errant wife and children. You are obliged to use force to the extent permissible. If you connive at their errant behaviour and do not attempt to reform them within the limits prescribed by Shariah, you expose yourself to the charge of being guilty.

You resolve to establish God's rule on earth if you get an opportunity. The empowerment at home is an opportunity which tests your resolve. If you succeed in making a few people submit to God in a small sphere where you have limited powers, then it can be hoped that you will establish God's kingdom on earth when you secure vast powers. If you fail in a small sphere, then you belie the other hope. Reform at home is the first step. If the first step is not completed, how can other steps follow? If you show indifference at home, you will be indifferent to the issue of guiding mankind too.

On occasions, preachers of Islam ponder over the total revolution they propose to bring about in the world. In their reflections, the reform of wife and children does not figure. They ignore it as though it were of no consequence. The revolution at home should precede the revolution in the world. If your wife and children love Islam and remain steadfast in the face of hardships and

enable you to remain steadfast too, then your missionary zeal will remain strong and you will serve the cause of religion with enthusiasm and single-mindedness. If, unfortunately, your home does not have religious ambience, then serving Islam outside will be no easy task. Many do not serve Islam simply because their wives and children create hurdles and stop them in their tracks. Will you still remain indifferent and refuse to appreciate the importance of reforming the home?

### (iii) Family Reform

In addition to the reform of wife and children, you have to think of the reform of your parents and siblings and closest relatives. They have greater right over you. God orders,

وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٢١٤﴾

“And admonish thy nearest kinsmen.” (Qur’an 26:214)

The family is an important institution of our social life. We are too tied to it to separate. We need the family and the family needs us. There is mutual cooperation. There are rights of one over the other. Religiosity of the family provides a basis for forming a relationship. If this religiosity is missing, forming and maintaining a relationship will pose a problem. There is a fear that at some stage you may face a dilemma whether to please the family or to please God and to please God you may be

constrained to break ties with the family.

The reform of the family is useful from another aspect. That is, members of a family share a spirit of cooperation and compassion and this spirit sometimes gets intensified into nepotism, forcing a man to say, "My family, right or wrong". Undoubtedly such an attitude is wrong. However, it is a fact that outside the circle of the family it is rare to come across a similar spirit of cooperation and compassion. If the family is religious, it will offer you the best cooperation, not simply because you are member but also because it is the demand of their religion and faith. The reform of the family will make your relationships proper and provide you with the best supporters.

If you turn away from family reform, you will hurt the cause dearest to you. The world notes whether you preach to your wife and children and family what you preach others. It will be hard to believe that you tell others Islam is the source of salvation and you don't tell the same truth to people at home and other members of the family. The world evaluates you against the backdrop of the commitment you, your home and your family show to the cause of Islam.

If your home and family are irreligious and you connive at this state of affairs, you present yourself as the greatest obstacle in the way of preaching. When your

wife and children ridicule religion, are guilty of ascribing partners to God and of resorting to innovation in faith, do what is prohibited, are insensitive to the distinction between right and wrong in business dealings, prefer pagan rituals to the etiquette inculcated by Allah and His prophet on the occasions of happiness and sorrow and you do not rectify these conditions, and instead go about advising people, the world will receive no impact from you. If you are disgusted with the ways of your family and have done your utmost to set matters right, in God's eyes you are exonerated and in the eyes of the public you have sufficient excuse.

The reform of home and family is an extremely delicate matter. The family ties, which ought to facilitate the task of reform, sometimes become the source of resistance. A person points out the mistakes of unrelated people freely but refuses to do so when a relative is involved. He wants to play safe, particularly when the erring relatives are senior, towards whom showing respect is his religious duty. As a reformer and trainer, the preacher of Islam has a special status. His duty is to guide the errant. This status inhibits his confrontation with the seniors whom he reveres. Our social manners do not allow us to call a spade a spade. It is genuine goodwill and true respect to unhesitatingly stop the errant behaviour of the seniors and guide them. Is it not ill-will to allow them to follow the path of perdition and to keep

them in the dark about the fate which, you know, will overtake them? It is the family that you remember first, on all occasions of happiness and sorrow. If you are convinced that true success and failure pertain to the hereafter, then it is your bounden duty to share this conviction with your family first. A close relative is moving towards hell and if you are not frantic to save him as you would be if he is about to drown, then it means that either you are not aware of the frightful nature of hell or your attachment to your close relative leaves much to be desired. Take the example of Prophet Ibraheem (alaihissalam). His father was committing not a trivial crime but was guilty of idolatry and worship of diverse gods. Prophet Ibraheem was not bogged down by social etiquette. Instead he informed his father about the consequences of his lifestyle and made no bones about it.

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَبْصُرُ وَلَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا ۖ  
يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي قَدْ جَاءَنِي مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ فَاتَّبِعْنِي أَهْدِكَ صِرَاطًا سَوِيًّا ۖ  
يَا أَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ ۚ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ عَصِيًّا ۖ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي أَخَافُ  
أَنْ يَسْكَ عَذَابَ مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيًّا ۖ

*“He said to his father:” O my father! Why worship that which heareth not and seeth not, and can profit thee nothing? O my father! To me hath come knowledge which hath not reached thee: so follow me: I will guide thee to a Way that is even and straight. O my father! Serve not Satan: for Satan is a rebel against (Allah) Most Gracious.*

*“O my father! I fear lest a chastisement afflict thee from (Allah) Most Gracious. So that thou become to Satan, a friend.”*  
*(Qur'an 19:42-45)*

The exalted Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) discharged the duty of forewarning the members of his family and apprised them of the fateful Day that is to come. When the commandment of God reached him that he should tell his close relatives about the Day that is going to be frightening, he took steps to do so. The details are recorded in the Traditions. He gathered his tribe and addressed each branch of the tribe by its name and said, “God's chastisement is in the offing. I warn you before its arrival. I am in the position of a person who, aware of the impending attack of the enemy on his tribe, shouts in the hope that the tribe will be alerted and will ward off the attack. O Bani Abdul Muttalib, O Bani Fahr, O Bani Lui! Protect yourselves from God's punishment. I will honour the rights that you have over me as my relatives. O my daughter Fatima, O my aunt Suphia! Protect yourselves from God's punishment. I am prepared to give what you want from my wealth and possessions. But, beware; on the Day of Judgment, I may not be of much help to you”.

(Bukhari, Kitabut Tafsir Commentary on Chapter 26; Muslim, Kitabul Iman)

Make your family steadfast if it is cooperative in the matter of religion and thank God that He has reduced

your burden to some extent. If, God forbid, your relatives are deeply involved in worldly affairs and are indifferent and hostile towards God's religion, then you have to tell them plainly and on occasions with clear proofs that their pattern of behaviour invites God's punishment and distances them from God's mercy. The Day of Judgment is sure to come. It is regrettable that they are not aware of it and have no plans to ward off God's punishment. It is your duty to tell this, just as it was the mission of the prophets to tell.

#### **(iv) Reform of Town and City:**

After the reform of home and family, it is your duty to take up the reform of the town in which you dwell. The town has done you so much good: you were born in it, you grew up in it, you attained youth in it. To repay this good, you have to spread God's religion in it and you have to inform its citizenry that there is going to be a day of which everyone needs to be afraid. You are more suitable for this job than an outsider; you have had several chances to acquaint yourself with the town's ambience, its ethos, and its merits and defects in the areas of thought and action. This qualifies you most eminently for the spread of God's religion. You will be a familiar figure in your town and the people will not meet you with the same mental reservation with which they will meet a stranger. The benefit from this is that they

will listen to you with the openness meant for the talk of one's own. If you deliver the message sincerely, sympathetically and with due regard to the peculiar conditions and problems of theirs, it will not be wrong to expect that they will more easily pay heed.

#### (v) Reform of the surrounding areas

After conveying the message of Islam in your town, you should not think that your job has been completed. You have to turn your attention now to the suburban areas. The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) was instructed to warn people of both Makkah and its surrounding areas,

وَالَّذِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّتُنْذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَىٰ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا

*"Thus have We sent by inspiration to thee an Arabic Qur'an: that thou mayst warn the Mother of cities and all around her."*

(Qur'an 42:7)

#### (vi) World reform

Even after carrying out the instruction given in Quranic verse quoted above, Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him), did not put an end to his missionary work. Instead he tried to globalize his work. The religion he was preaching was not meant for a particular nation or a particular geographical area, but for the whole world. The Qur'an is explicit on this issue.



وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا

*“We have not sent thee but as (Messenger) to all mankind, giving them glad tidings and warning them (against sin).”*

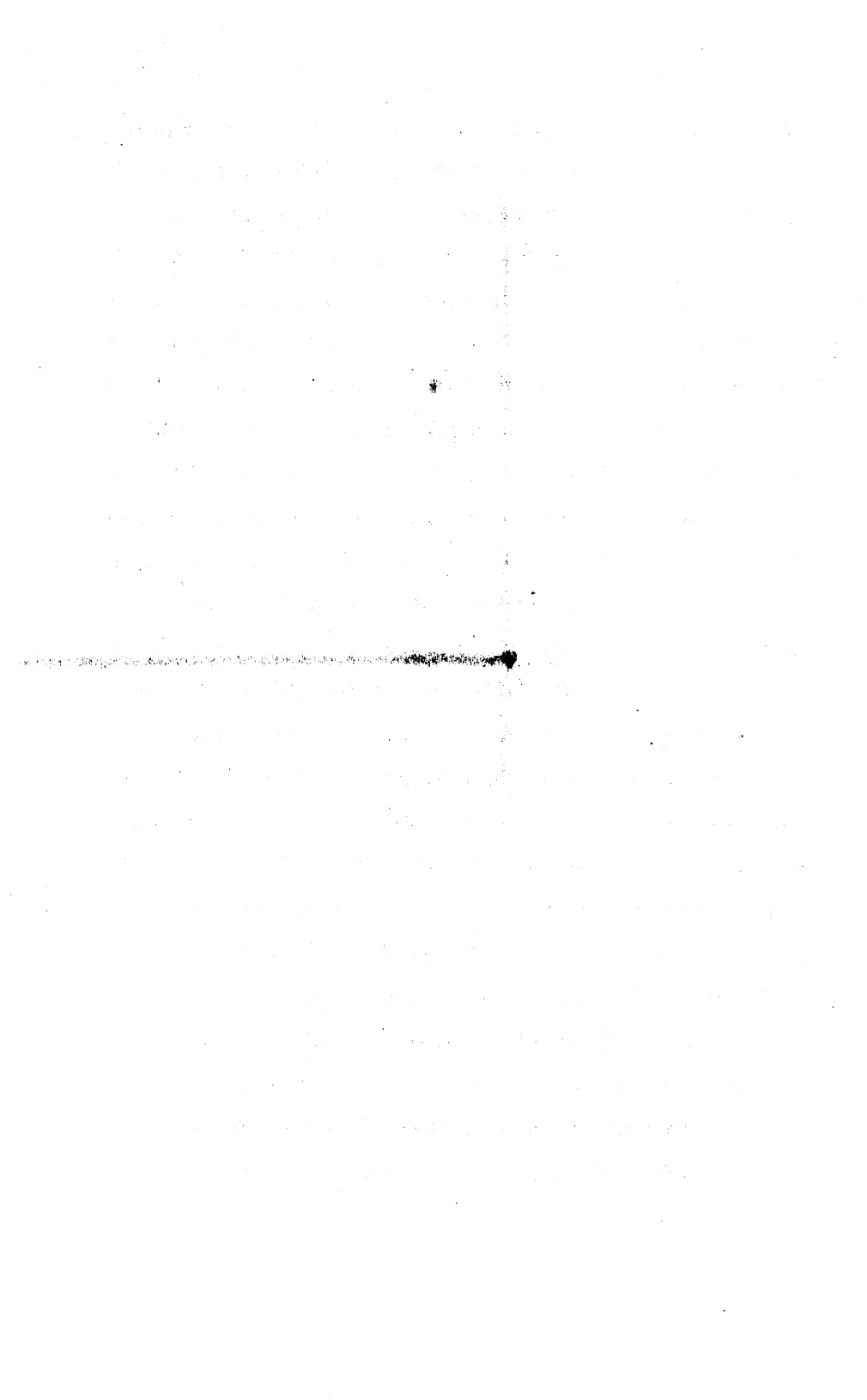
*(Quran 34:28)*

Please keep in mind the fact you are the preacher of a world religion and an heir to a world prophet. It is your duty to spread this religion throughout the world and you have to try to make the people aware of the consequences of the rejection of this religion. You will not have discharged your duty if you have not done so and in spite of being a follower of the Prophet, you will not be considered a proper heir of his.

#### **(vii) A misunderstanding cleared**

The sequence of the call to faith explained above is important from the point of view of Islamic jurisprudence and that of rationality. At the same time rigid conformity to this sequence is not insisted upon and it is not wrong to vary the sequence. Expediency alters the sequence and amendments to this programme under the demands of the call are valid. The sequence does not materialize before us in the form of clear-cut stages of the call to faith. The sequence only indicates various areas of engagement and it is possible for a preacher to launch a multipronged missionary work at one and the same time. It is possible that the facilities available to you at home and in the family may become available to you to address large

nations. It is also possible that the atmosphere at home may not be so conducive to the call to faith as the conditions outside home may be. Not to make use of these external conditions under the mistaken notion that the missionary work in the family and the tribe is not yet complete will be an act of extreme folly. While being engaged in the reform of home or of the family and the tribe, the extensive scope of preaching and reform should be ever present before you and to the extent possible you have to uphold it. The sequence spelt out above should not lead you to think that only when the work in one area is complete, work in another area should be commenced or that unless the home is completely reformed, no attempt to reform the family should be made or that only on the completion of your missionary work in the town, the missionary work in the country should be thought of. The sequence was spelt out to tell a person not to forget and overlook home, family and surrounding areas in the zeal for world reform. It is extremely improper and a very grave mistake to ignore the need for reforming wife and children and to concentrate on the reform of others. He who does so will be questioned. It is also true that this mistake will not render his attempt to reform others condemnable in the eyes of God. This attempt per se is commendable and remains commendable in fact.



## **II D. Fundamentals of Preaching**

The Qur'an and the Traditions ordain the preaching of Islam and enunciate its principles and procedures. However, the volunteer-preachers are either unfamiliar with them or unaware of their importance. The work of Islam can be done properly when it is done on the lines prescribed by the Qur'an and the Traditions. Man cannot become a successful preacher if he deviates from those lines in spite of his straining every nerve. Deviation from those lines may not serve the cause of religion; instead, it may do serious harm, undoing which may take years on end.

The fundamentals to be kept in view relate to the following: how to present an authentic version of Islam with its distinguishing features intact; how to take into account the attitude of the addressee towards Islam, in presenting it and responding proportionately to the importance the addressee gives to the religion; how much the preacher himself has understood his religion and how much civility and courtesy he will display in the art of preaching—the higher his grasp of the subject and his character, the brighter the chances of conversion.

The fundamentals of preaching are hereby sequentially presented.

### **1. How to present Islam?**

This is the first question. In this connection, a few basic points should remain in focus.

#### **a) The message is for all**

Allah has revealed this message to enable every man to choose it voluntarily and freely. It is not a family or group monopoly. It belongs to him who chooses it. It should be preached to all. You may go from one group to another according to your convenience but you are not justified in making it a regional or national movement or adopting a posture which leads to an impression that Islam is not the source of guidance for mankind but only an attempt at the reform or success of a particular nation. To create an ambience which denies the benefit of Islam to many is not only a distortion of Islam but also an atrocity on mankind. To create a gulf between an individual or a group and Islam is a more serious crime than to deny free air. Asphyxiation ends a transient life, but to be deprived of God's religion leads to perdition. Unfortunately Muslims have been functioning as though Islam is their religion only. Their thoughts are directed towards their gain or loss; their activities are community-oriented only. Even propagation of faith is

confined to their own circle, as though the religion of God is meant for them only and others have no share in it. So, the first duty of the preachers of Islam is to present Islam as the wealth of mankind and not as the property of a particular group. This presentation must be both oral and practical. In all matters, their stance must reflect the global nature of their mission. Mere oral claims cannot carry conviction with the world that Islam is a religion for mankind. It is necessary the Muslims should rise above national prejudices and deal justly and fairly with one and all. Their support or opposition should not be arbitrary. Support should be given to him who is in the right even if he is a total stranger; we part company with him who is at fault even if he is closely related to us. Friendship and enmity should be determined by the religion of God and not by any other consideration.

**b) Islam should reform life in toto**

Man should lead his whole life oriented towards God's pleasure as it is God's will. That was why prophets were sent and religion was revealed. The preacher stands up in the midst of the people to expound this purpose of the religion; he has to use all his persuasive powers to invite people to follow Islam in every walk of life. It is regrettable that Islam is being introduced as a religion concerned with supramundane matters unrelated to life. The articles and speeches of the scholars and learned

people do not deal with the questions of what God wants and how His will can be fulfilled. Instead, they discuss forcefully whether the soul has an origin or whether the sky is subject to wear and tear. Such questions interest very few people and those people may use such questions for research and not for their own lives. The common people are by no means affected by such questions.

This is the condition of the scholars and very important people among the Muslims. The common masses have demonstrated, not by the word but by deed, that the observance of some lifeless rituals on some important occasions or during festivals is what is required of them. This demonstration has deprived Islam of its infinite beauty and terminated its natural magnetism. It is obvious that every community has its rituals and is as much fond of them as you are of your rituals. Why should another community renounce its own rituals and adopt your own, when there is no rationale for it?

There is no doubt that the scripture given by God is available with us in its pristine purity. Through it man can ascertain what God's religion is. But, the conduct of those believing in it is more or less a hindrance. They think that the Qur'an is meant for reading it without understanding it, for quoting it during the wedding ceremony, for reducing the physical pain at the time of dying, for the forgiveness of the sins of the deceased, and

for exorcism. Other communities have ‘‘religious books’’ for these ‘‘lofty ideals’’. So, why should they turn to the Qur’an which is, according to Muslims, the word of God? So, the preachers have to change this attitude of the co-religionists and others, and to stress that success here and in the Hereafter is dependent on how one treats the Qur’an. If they accept the Qur’an, their problems get solved as though they were awaiting their solution eagerly from the beginning. If they reject it, they will fail to solve their problems and, in addition, they will ruin their Hereafter.

**c) Importance should be given to precept**

Islam has certain basic tenets and a complicated system has branched out from them. When the tenets are accepted, one cannot reject the implication easily. If the tenets are unacceptable, then the details founded on them get rejected too. That is why, Islam attaches great importance to the basic doctrines, and lays more emphasis on them than on their details. In the recent past, the service to Islam was rendered more in the area of details than in the area of doctrines. No attempt was made to prove the truth of the basic postulates of Islam. However, the subsidiary details of Islam were researched and discussed in large volumes painstakingly and incisively. The world rejected the existence of God and the institution of Prophethood. Atheism and agnosticism



have dominated thoughts, culture and civilization, art and craft, governance and politics to such an extent that the believers in God began to entertain doubts about their belief and some of them even turned atheists. But the scholars of our religion avoided the attacks of atheism as though the basic postulates of our religion were not being questioned in any part of the world. All the religious erudition was focused on the questions like whether hands should be raised while uttering 'Allah-u-Akbar' or not and whether 'Amen' should be uttered aloud or not in the Prayer. No doubt, on certain occasions, such academic discussions have their relevance and are useful for the believers. But where faith itself is vulnerable, details regarding ablution and bathing are irrelevant.

Undeniably it will be a travesty of fact to assert that all scholars of Islam were distracted by trivial problems and no attempt whatsoever was made to strengthen the foundation of religion. It is a fact that several attempts were made and some of them were commendable. Still these attempts were substandard from the point of view of contemporary standards of scholarship and lacked the substance that could satisfy intellect. Therefore the scholars of Islam should strive to meet this deficiency fully. Otherwise the high quality service that Islam requires today may not be rendered.

The best procedure of the call to faith is that the foundational doctrines should be strengthened and the

importance of the subsidiary details should be in accordance with the dictates of religion, without reducing or increasing it. If you do not satisfy a person about the truth of the basic postulates, and go on to satisfy him about the consequent details, then it will be an exercise in futility. You will be constructing an edifice without a foundation and it will come crashing down when the wind blows.

#### **D) The spirit of religion should be fostered**

Islam has both letter and spirit. The spirit of Islam is that there should be absolute obedience and submission to God and the desire to carry out every injunction of His. The letter of Islam is that legal system (Shariath) which spells out detailed regulations for man's activities. The call to faith will be moving in the right direction if the spirit of Islam is fostered more than its letter because once this is done, man will automatically begin to worry how he has to secure God's approval in every matter. Without this spirit there is always this danger or deviation from Islam at every step. Another risk is that, without this spirit, if a person is made to conform to one part of Shariath, he might conform to it by force of habit but he might find it difficult to conform to another part of Shariath. You might inculcate in him the value of certain observances and he might abide by them steadfastly and he might not worry to know what the other demands of

Islam are. It has been seen that people trained to observe certain rules of Shariath without the spirit of Islam being fostered stick to their training but there are many other rules of Shariath pertaining to more serious matters to which they are victims of indifference as though they have received no orders to observe them.

## **2. The Target Audience and Its Pattern of Behaviour**

To give a call to faith it is necessary first to understand the inclinations and mental condition of the addressee. Unless you know whether he is inclined to accept or reject Islam and unless you know the degree and nature of his acceptance and rejection, you cannot successfully prepare the text of your call to faith. It will be like shooting arrows without a target and so a waste of energy.

### **a) Variety of Addressees:**

Not all people treat Islam alike. Some people are already on the lookout for it and when the message of Islam reaches them, they hasten towards it as a thirsty man hasten towards water. The very appearance of Islam is the cause for their embracing it. Their genuine and uncorrupted nature does not allow them to accept any faith other than the religion of God. If by chance they come under the influence of any other religion, its defect soon becomes apparent to them and they reject it without

any hesitation. The preacher does not have to work hard to bring them closer to God. Instead, as soon as Islam rings in their ears they respond to it on their own. Their temperament does not permit them to stick to a baseless philosophy.

Some oppose Islam. Their opposition is principled and ideological. It is not that they don't want to embrace Islam but that its veracity has not dawned upon them. As soon as they comprehend its truth, they cut asunder all chains and embrace Islam with a rush of emotion with which a mother embraces her long-lost child when it makes its appearance before her. Before such a group, the preacher has only to supply proofs about the truth of Islam and for this purpose he should not employ the method that logicians use to justify their claims. This method silences the addressee who prefers to run away from the argumentative nature of the logicians and whose heart does not open up to their truth. For the preacher, this method is not correct and he does not stand in need of it to prove the truth of Islam. He has to adopt a different method which should so fully convince the heart and the mind of the addressee that he should spontaneously come closer to Islam. The religion of God is in full accord with the nature of macrocosm (cosmos) and of microcosm (man). History bears witness to the fact that whenever man accepted it, he was successful and that whenever he rejected it he courted divine

chastisement. If this fact is metamorphosed into a proof, no sober and reasonable person can reject it.

Some reject belief unreasonably. They are affected by base urges. Lack of comprehension is not the reason for rejection but sheer obstinacy. A preacher should work in their midst until the reasons for rejection become manifest. After that he should seek other target audiences where better result can be expected.

There are others who may like the principles of Islam in general but are not prepared to follow the natural and compulsory demands of Islam. Enunciating the basics of Islam before them is unwarranted. Instead Islam should be presented before them in such a manner that the necessity of the follow-up action after embracing Islam cannot be rejected. Some of these people may not be aware of those demands; it is enough if that awareness is created. Some others are in total agreement with Islam, theoretically speaking, but do not cooperate with it in practice. The preacher may have to use carrot-and-stick strategy with them. That is, he has to explain what rewards are given for obedience and what dire consequences await disobedience. There may be some others with whom the preacher may have to enter into argument on various issues but he will have to ensure that the debate does not degenerate into a wordy duel but should become a pleasant exchange for elucidation. In a wordy duel, the other party is treated as a rival and every

statement of his is refuted and rejected even if what he says is true. A preacher cannot afford to adopt such a stance; at every step, he has to show that he is committed to truth. If what the other man says is true, he will happily acknowledge it and if what the other man says is false, he will reject it in a decent manner and try wisely to set right the other man's line of thinking. If a man does not possess such sobriety and wisdom, he is not qualified to be a preacher; he will have to work hard to qualify himself.

#### **b) Addressing the Elitists**

Some of the addressees may enjoy the status of being leaders and a majority of others will be their followers. If the preacher wishes to convey the message of God to such leaders and their followers who are indifferent to guidance, it will be a commendable but impracticable wish because his resources are limited and the circle of his vocation is small. He has two alternatives before him. One, he can ignore the leaders and concentrate upon the commoners. Two, he addresses the leaders and simultaneously reaches out to the commoners to the extent possible. The second approach was the approach of the prophets. They first addressed the leaders of their communities and they would do their utmost to guide them because the conversion of at least one of them would open the door of conversion for many. A leader by

means of his leadership qualities and the clout he enjoys can achieve in the field of conversion what a whole team of lower classes cannot achieve. As a result, a preacher with the leader's help can get result in months and days what he could have got in years working all by himself. Penetration into the higher echelons of society holds the key to the success of a message.

Prophets possess excellent competence to disseminate their message and address the elitist group in their community with ease and success. Their work is now being carried on by a community which is a mixed-ability group. Some members of this group have opportunities to address the leaders and some other members do not have them. So each member is obliged to fix the scope of his work in the light of his personal competence and the opportunities available. It should be borne in mind that inferiority complex should not decide the evaluation of personal competence. He should never overlook the fact that he has truth in his possession and the one who opposes truth, however eminent he may be, is weak in his contention. The preacher, therefore, must seek for his vocation areas which demand higher competence from him and whenever he gets a chance he must present his message without reluctance and inhibition. Initially there will be difficulties which however will enable the preacher's talents to blossom. Moreover, God will not leave him in the lurch because he

is engaged in His service and He will come to his rescue. If he is busy inviting people of lesser talents, his work may become easy but his own talents and skills will not be honed. He may not turn to God in the same way as he would while facing challenge and difficulties.

### **3. Ethical and Intellectual Aspects of the Preacher**

Two aspects of the preacher determine the success and failure of his mission. One, how much has he grasped his mission? How much has he internalised it? What tone and what materials will he make use of? Two, what will be his approach to the addressee? In proportion to the goodness and reasonableness of his approach, the prospects of the addressee's inclination to come near and listen will brighten. If the preacher's approach is wrong, a gulf will be created between the addressee and the message. In the following paragraphs, light will be thrown on these two aspects.

#### **a) A clear understanding of the message is a must:**

The preacher should have a clear understanding of Islam. He should know what Islam is and why it should be spread. He should be focused upon the purpose and destination of Islam. He should be fully aware of its demands and know well what its proper methodology should be. If the preacher does not have a clear



perspective on all these matters, there will be two resultant losses. One he will not be able to present Islam with clarity. As a result, one cannot expect the progress and spread of Islam. That message will fail whose preacher cannot tell what he wants and why. Two, he will not be able to distinguish between Islam and rival religions and he may accept non-Islamic ideas as Islamic and spread them with enthusiasm too.

**b) Present the Message in a clear and effective manner.**

Man is in a state of blissful ignorance. Until he is shaken, he will not wake up. Therefore, the preacher has to deliver the message enthusiastically and forcefully and adopt an approach that will revive the inept conscience and stir the addressee's emotion. The flat and lifeless style of the philosophers will not do justice to the proclamation of faith. A preacher has to be clear and unambiguous. If even after the delivery of a long discourse, the preacher is asked to clarify his purpose and desire, then his speech becomes enigmatic and it is not suited for a preacher. Involved style, farfetched similitudes, recondite diction, superfluous elaboration or incomprehensible brevity—all these are either unbecoming of a preacher or obstacles in communication. Plain and forthright language is preferable or speak in a way that easily aids the comprehension of the listener.

Effectiveness is lost through involution and ambiguity. People remain unmoved.

**c) Permissible means must be used**

The ways permitted by Islam should be used to spread Islam. Without confining oneself to the limits of permission, it is a sin for one to aim at preaching. The religion of God is definitely not in need of promotion through illegal and dubious means. That man who on the one hand blurs the distinction between what is religiously right and what is religiously wrong and on the other extols the virtues of following and establishing religion is either a nincompoop or a hypocrite. One cannot expect a good result from the reprehensible methods of spreading religion. Such methods can only harm the cause of religion. Such methods can appeal to a person deprived of rationality or truly determined to sabotage the religion of God. If you establish a centre for the propagation of faith with the revenue from usury, it will not propagate but humiliate religion. How unfortunate are those people whose intention is to serve the religion of God and to please God but who choose a strategy harmful to the religion and pleasing to Satan!

**d) Take into account the ethos of religion**

The preacher must work within the parameters allowed by Islam and take into account its ethos. Islam

has its unique chemistry; many things are suitable to it and many things are not suitable. The preacher should choose the suitable things and eschew the unsuitable ones. When unsuitable methods are used for the spread of Islam, one cannot realize the glory of Islam. Instead one will turn away from Islam with disgust and contempt. If by chance a person ever comes near Islam, in practice he will not care for Islamic ethos, he will transgress its limits. Unless a preacher renounces all that is burdensome to Islamic ethos, he cannot reveal the greatness of Islam. That greatness can be revealed only when it is spread by not causing the slightest harm to its spirit.

**e) Be mindful of the preparedness of the people**

A preacher has to find out if the target group is mentally prepared to pay heed to the call of faith. Only when the addressees are open-minded and inclined to reflect and ponder, the message should be spelt out. When they are not in a mood to listen, the preacher should not bother them. There is no other way in this world to secure peace and contentment except through the religion of God. There will be many occasions when a man, without the benefit of God's religion, intensely realizes that all the ways and means through which he is seeking peace and contentment are bootless and unreliable. A preacher should seize those occasions to

present Islam most effectively and discreetly. He should work hard on those occasions as there will be a greater possibility for the listener to pay heed and to express agreement.

Such occasions, ripe for attention and acceptance, occur not only in the lives of the individuals but also of groups and nations indifferent to God. It will be grievously wrong not to take advantage of such occasions. A preacher should not waste such occasions but be on the lookout for them diligently.

**f) Be wary of using offensive epithets like 'Kafir' or 'Benighted'**

A preacher works in the midst of people who have gone astray from the Straight Path. If he addresses them as libertines or stray people, he will be describing them accurately. Still he should avoid addressing them thus except when it becomes an unavoidable religious need. It is natural from man to take offence when he is dubbed an irreligious or deviant person. It is feared that such offensive epithets may touch an obstinate chord in him and he may decisively refuse to listen.

**g) Don't be arrogant and abrasive**

A preacher should not take pride in his being a guide and a reformer. This pride will be counterproductive for him. Pride and arrogance, being moral filth, will spread

miasma all around. An affable person may not relish the company of an arrogant person. A preacher should not think that by reforming others he is doing a favour to them. Instead he must think that he is just doing his duty. In the midst of so many people who have gone astray from and are indifferent to God's religion, it is indeed a great favour of God that He has given a status to a person by appointing him a guide. If the preacher realizes the greatness of that favour truly, he will not hold his head high in pride but lower it in gratitude before God.

The preacher should not adopt an autocratic tone in his address. It is a tone of the people who look upon others as their subordinates. A preacher does not intend to enslave others and to dominate over them. He comes out into the open to inform that all human beings are slaves of one God and all should worship Him only and he treats his listener not as an inferior person but tries to reform him as a brother gone wrong. No wealth is greater for a preacher than a person's acceptance of Islam. Not every preacher gains this wealth; it comes to that fortunate person whose words are characterised by sincerity and angst, whose speech exudes affection and love and whose conversation mirrors his distress over people's misconduct and a genuine eagerness for their reform.

#### **h) Be a man of Character**

The demeanour of a preacher should not be such as

to provoke a target listener to flee on seeing him or to oppose him. The preacher should be morally so sublime as to attract people and induce them to listen. The so-called volunteers of Islam have earned notoriety for their short temper and volatile nature whereas they are expected to be most upright and cultured. Islam cannot be conceived shorn of culture and character. A preacher should be eager to eradicate the prevalent social evils but should not hate wicked people. He should keep away from evil practices but should not boycott the people indulging in them. This boycott will end all possibility of reform and may even facilitate greater indulgence in evil practices. The preacher should not forget that when evil is rife in society and people do not show inclination towards goodness and piety, it may not be possible for a man to resist evil. So he deserves sympathy from the preacher and not cynicism and criticism, ranting and raving, scorn and contempt. If you use pungent remarks and ridicule a case of misconduct, the affected person's emotions may be inflamed and he may refuse to mend his manners. The preacher should always bear in mind that the bitterness of his tone should not alienate the listener from Islam and that he should not fail in his lofty mission on account of his clumsiness and indiscretion.

#### **i) Dont't expect quick results**

The last but not the least instruction in this

connection is that the preacher should not be a man in haste because such a person cannot render justice to his mission. The blessed souls, quick to seize the opportunity for reform, are few. Sometimes the preacher's life and mission may come to an end without registering any large scale reform among the people. If he desires quick results, he may be disappointed and may give up his mission. He may have to continue calling people towards the religion of God in a steady and sustained manner until the religion prevails and pervades or his life comes to an end during the long-drawn endeavour.

## **II E. The Preacher is Successful**

### **i. Two standards of Success**

There can be two standards for the evaluation of a preacher's success or failure. One, what his message for the people is. In proportion to the purity and sublimity of his ideology, he will be deemed successful. Some people espouse evil causes. They are the most unsuccessful as they ruin themselves and others. Some other people espouse partial reform and they are focused on promoting little acts of kindness. In sharp contrast, still some others aspire to do total good to man and uplift him. The last two groups are dedicated to human welfare and still there is a sea of difference between them and so the scale of greatness and success which belongs to the latter cannot belong to the former.

The second standard of evaluation relates to the range of benefit that the world derived from the ideology. How many people extinguished their thirst from the pond? How many travellers relaxed in the shade of the tree? This standard is superficial and not reliable. One who bears witness to truth in this world is definitely



successful and if another is fortunate to accept truth through his good offices it will be an external proof his success. But if no one cooperates with that witness to truth and rejects truth in spite of his best efforts, still his greatness and success will remain unaffected.

Islam offers the truest precepts for the human species and a most balanced system for the whole life, eradicating asymmetry everywhere, so a missionary for Islam can never ever fail. It is enough for his success that he invites people towards Islam. He does not fail; it is the individual or the group, declining the invitation, that fails.

## **ii. The Preacher's Obligation**

The success of a preacher is not to be seen in relation to the results of his efforts but to be seen in relation to the discharge of his duty. After accepting Islam, man must propagate it as a matter of duty. Under all circumstances he has to discharge it, whether the world accepts Islam or not, and whether Islam prevails or does not have a chance to prevail. The acceptance and the propagation of Islam synchronise. This duty cannot be abolished on the ground that people are hostile towards Islam and are not prepared to hear anything about it. It is not necessary for the propagation that the addressee has to be converted; it is enough for the man in possession of truth to realize that the world is indifferent to it. Men,

forgetful of God and unaware of God's religion, are in need of someone who should convey it to them. They, then, can decide to follow that religion or shun it.

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاءُ وَاللَّهُ بِصِيرَتِهِ بِالْعِبَادِ ۝

*“But if they turn back, the duty is to convey the Message; and in Allah's sight are (all) His servants”.*

*(Qur'an 3:20)*

The preacher renders justice to the propagation of Islam when he does it as a duty and is not bothered about the consequences. He should be engaged and remain engaged in this work, irrespective of the suitability or otherwise of the circumstances and of the warm welcome or cold shoulder being accorded to it. If he wants to propagate only when the world welcomes Islam warmly, then he cannot truly propagate it. In this world the achievers assess themselves on their own and not in comparison with others. Lost is the man who remains inactive because others are indifferent and who prefers to ignore his duties. Muslims don't have to give up propagation simply because the world is not interested. If the target audience does not realize its own duty, how does that entitle the Muslims to be deficient in the discharge of their own duties? They can neither renounce Islam nor give up its propagation for a moment, even when hostile forces combine to pounce upon them and when there is no one to sympathise with them.

There is no doubt that atheism is dominant

everywhere. God is either forgotten or treated with boredom. Ritualistic religiosity is manifest here and there but genuine religiosity is conspicuously absent. Even men of influence are reluctant to mention God. By discussing religion, one estranges oneself from one's company, and one's discussion sounds unfamiliar. Such a person appears anachronistic and backward-looking and as a prisoner of the past. It is all true; still this does not justify the end of the missionary work. Darkling he has to work. He does not know who is ready to open his heart to him, to convert, and to accept the truth from within the hostile atmosphere. If the preacher gives up his work, then the righteous people will be deprived of truth and on the Day of Judgment he will be accused of dereliction of duty and punished. By looking at the face one can determine who is a friend and who is a foe. A preacher goes in search of such friends on whose faces there are no signs of friendship. Day and night he has to work before he secures kindred souls. Securing them is far more invaluable than any other gift; they are the rubies and diamonds of humanity that he has come by. The Prophet's advice to Hazrath Ali is applicable to every preacher:

قَوِّ اللَّهَ لِأَنَّ يَهْدِيَ اللَّهُ بِكَ رَجُلًا وَاحِدًا خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونَ  
لَكَ حُمْرُ النَّعَمِ.

*I swear by God, that if God guides a person through you, you will be more fortunate than (by owning) red*

*camels. (Bukhari, Kitabul Jihad wa Siyar)*

### **iii. The Preacher is Successful**

Allah desires that men should understand Islam clearly so that there should be no mental reservation about it to justify their rejection of Islam. It is the responsibility of the Muslims to fulfil this desire. They would have discharged their duty if, without deficiency, they had done their best to make Islam comprehensible. They would be no longer accountable to God even if they had not converted even one person and even if all had rejected their message. God would not ask them how many they converted. The success of a preacher does not need the rate of conversion; it is dependent on their unsparing effort. Muslims are accountable to God in matters under their power; they are not accountable in matters beyond their power. They have power over themselves, they can change themselves in accordance with God's commandment, then they must change themselves. They can mould themselves in order to secure God's approval, then let them do so. They can spend their mental, financial, and intellectual assets in the way of Allah, then let them do so. If there is any deficiency in these matters, they will be held accountable because God's gifts have not been spent in God's way. They cannot give what they do not possess and so no question will be asked. It is not within their powers to change others except themselves and God has not given

that responsibility of changing others to them.

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ

*“It is not for you to guide them to the right path. But Allah guides to the right path whom He pleaseth.”*

*(Qur'an 2:272)*

Conveying the message is an obligation upon Muslims; conversion is not. If the message has been conveyed properly, then they have completed their mission successfully and discharged their duty. If the listener rejects the message, it is his mistake. The Muslims are not answerable for it. Take the Prophets for example. If the success of a preacher is to be measured in terms of the rate of conversion, then many prophets will not appear to be successful. They called people to faith extremely sincerely throughout their lives and still it so happened that that they could not convert even those who were closest to them. After the preaching of 950 years by Noah (peace be upon him), his son remained unreformed. Abraham (Peace be upon him) invited his father to accept truth but in vain and he had to part company with his father. Lot (peace be upon him) could not convert his wife and God's punishment did not spare her.

إِنَّا مُنَجِّوْكَ وَ أَهْلَكَ إِلَّا أَمْرًا تَكَّ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَوَّارِينَ

*“We are (here) to save thee and thy following, except thy wife; she is of those who lag behind.” (Quran 29:33)*

Look at the way Abu Talib, uncle of the last Prophet, Muhammad (blessings of Allah and peace be upon him),

dealt with the nephew's message. On the one hand, he loved his nephew more dearly than he loved his own children, bore difficulties on his behalf and resisted others, endured confinement in a valley but refused to hand over his nephew to his enemies. On the other hand, he refused to participate in the missionary work of his nephew even after ten long years. The Prophet approached him when he lay on his death-bed and said,

اى عم قل لا اله الا الله كلمة احاج بها عند الله

*“Dear Uncle, please utter the proposition that there is no other God except Allah. On the basis of this proposition, I will endeavour to secure salvation for you from Allah.”<sup>1</sup>*

This plea should have melted any heart but Abu Talib did not agree and preferred to die in the faith of his ancestors. The Prophet referred to a messenger who was unique in the history of the Prophets because he had only one follower.<sup>2</sup> Can we say that Messenger was a failure? Definitely not. He exerted his utmost and he conveyed the message perfectly. He deserves to get the highest wages from God.

Some people have prodigious enthusiasm for propagation without realizing their real role. They are only preachers of God's religion; they are not responsible

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- (1) Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Manaqibil Ansar, wa Kitabut tafseer, Tafseer surah Tauba.
- (2) Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Iman, Babo Fi Qolin Nabi ana Auwalun Nas Yashfah fil Jannah...

for the guidance of others. This misunderstanding about the role is a very serious and grievous fault. They cannot continue their mission for a long time and they give in to despair pretty soon. A man proclaims the message quite sincerely and after a long period he sees that the listener does not open his heart to his preaching, remains unmoved after all clarification, and returns his sincerity with hostility. Then the preacher is assailed by pessimism: "Will my lifelong effort go waste? Will not the message succeed? Will I not be able to bring about a shift in the listener's stance? This pessimism breaks his will and robs him of his courage. This frustrating end to a bright beginning is due to the confusion that the preacher had with regard to his role. The preacher is expected to convey to others the religion that he considers to be true but he exaggerates his role and thinks that he has been appointed to win followers for the religion. The Qur'an spells out clearly God's ruling in this matter:

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ

*"It is true thou wilt not be able to guide every one whom thou lovest; but Allah guides those whom He will."*

(Qur'an 28:56)

If a preacher gets heart-broken and cuts short his missionary work because no one listens to truth and the world pays no attention to him, he has to be told, " You are carrying on a burden, not placed by God; you are suffering from a grief whose remedy you don't have. It is

not your mission to guide others, it is the mission of God who controls both guidance and seduction." What a misfortune it is that man forgets his own work and imagines God's work to be his own.

وَإِنْ كَانَ كَدُّكَ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاضُهُمْ فَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَبْتَغِيَ نَفَقًا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
أَوْ سُلَّمًا فِي السَّمَاءِ فَتَأْتِيَهُمْ بِآيَةٍ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى الْهُدَى فَلَا  
تَكُونُ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

*"If their spurning is hard on thee, yet if thou wert able to seek a tunnel in the ground or a ladder to the skies and bring them a sign -(what good?) If it were Allah's will, He could gather them together unto true guidance, so be not thou amongst those who are swayed by ignorance (and impatience)!" (Qur'an 6:35)*

Everyone in this world has chosen a way and pursues it blindly and loves it too much to abandon it. It is only the daring souls who gain the religion of God. They have the courage to change course on realizing their mistake; they have not decided to cling to falsehood and are ever ready to accept the truth. The seeker of truth gains truth. The invitation to truth is irrelevant to one who is not thirsty for it. The voice of truth may reach the ear-drum but not his heart. The light of truth may spread over the face of the earth but his closed eyes will not see it. The world may tread the path of truth but his legs will be heavy and walking will be difficult for him. Rejecting truth after fully comprehending it deprives a man of the capacity to accept truth. In such a situation, the Qur'an



instructs the preacher to leave such people to themselves and to continue his own work. Their rejection does not imply that he is (God forbid) in the wrong and that he has to mend his ways. When he is aware that truth is on his side and that opposition is due to mere obstinacy, his faith in the truth of his standpoint should increase and he should know that his opponents occupy a vulnerable position. He has strong points to buttress his position and his opponents are devoid of them. Thus he is enriched and empowered over and above his rivals.

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالبَصِيرُ ۚ وَلَا الظُّلُمُتُ وَلَا النُّورُ ۚ وَلَا الظُّلُمُتُ وَلَا النُّورُ ۚ وَلَا الظُّلُمُتُ وَلَا النُّورُ ۚ  
 الْحَرُورُ ۚ وَ مَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَحْيَاءُ وَلَا الْأَمْوَاتُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسْمِعُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ  
 وَمَا أَنتَ بِمُسْمِعٍ مَّن فِي الْقُبُورِ ۝

*"The blind and the seeing are not alike; nor are the depths of Darkness and the Light; nor are the (chilly) shade and the (genial) heat of the sun; nor are alike those that are living and those that are dead. Allah can make any that He wills to hear, but thou canst not make those to hear who are buried in graves."*

(Qur'an 35:19-22)

#### **(iv) The Difference between the success of the message and the success of the preacher**

Many people don't distinguish between the success of the message and the success of the preacher even though these are two distinct things. The success of the preacher is independent of the success of the message. The preacher may die without converting a single person or

he may replace a wicked regime with the kingdom of God. In either case he is victorious. His success is not dependent on the practical domination of truth and the subordination of evil because this relates not to the preacher but to the response of the people in whose midst he propagates the message. If they accept it, truth will dominate; if they reject it, it will not dominate. It is obvious that the preacher does not stand in need of an occurrence beyond his control to measure his success. If the whole world rejects his message with one voice, even then he cannot be blamed for it. This rejection is not his fault but the fault of the target audience. In God's durbar, an innocent person will not be prosecuted for the crime committed by another person.

As soon as the call to faith is set in motion, evil does not necessarily disappear and the rule of truth is established. Sometimes truth has been persecuted and sometimes it has triumphed here. However, the advocate of truth has always been successful and he never fails. The success of a mission is achieved when opposing forces beat a retreat and the mission becomes all-pervasive. The success of a missionary just needs an all-out effort. His greatest desire is to see truth dominant and falsehood suppressed. All matters should be decided in accordance with God's legislation and the pseudo-courts should be abolished. The missionary would not rest until the religion of God secures ultimate

triumph and is at the helm of affairs. If he dies during his endeavours, he will be deemed successful even if the mission is not successful. The missionary passes through different stages; he conveys the message, he bears persecution, he organizes the seekers of truth, he occupies the throne of success. If he passes away before he reaches the last stage it means-that the mission remains incomplete but the duty of the missionary is over. At whatever stage he dies, that is his destination. At every stage he is successful; at whatever stage he is assassinated, he is successful.

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ  
وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَنْتَظِرُ \* وَمَا بَدَّلُوا كَيْدًا ۖ

*"Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah: of them some have died and some (still) wait: but they have never changed (their determination) in the least."* (Qur'an 33:23)

The Qur'an maintains that it is not in your hands but in the hands of God to make truth supreme and to suppress evil. So let Allah decide. When He wants, He will make His religion supreme. You should not give up your mission in despair as this will be your great personal failure.

وَإِنْ مَا تُرِيدُكَ بَعْضَ الْإِثْنِ نَعُدُّهُمْ أَوْ تَكُفُّنَا عَنْكَ الْإِبْلَٰغُ وَ  
عَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ ۖ

*"Whether We shall show thee (within thy life-time)*

*part of what We promised them or take to Us thy soul (before it is all accomplished). Thy duty is to make (the Message) reach them; it is Our part to call them to account."*  
(Qur'an 13:40)

### **(v) The Effects of the Message**

Man naturally expects to see the fruits of his labour in his lifetime. It is not easy for him to perform any task without any interest in its consequences. But if we separate political dominance from the consequences, we perceive that the voice of the sincere missionary definitely registers effects somewhat wherever it is heard even though he may not make his mission politically dominant. Many people extolled the virtues of truth, sincerity, trustworthiness, piety, cleanliness and fear of God in the past. They however did not trigger a political revolution. At the same time it is a fact that their teachings entered into the lives of their opponents stealthily and the opponents' thinking was subtly influenced by their value-system in deciding many of their personal matters. There is no gainsaying the fact that when a dynamic movement arises, its immediate neighbourhood cannot remain totally unaffected by it. Sometimes the impact may not be seen in a solid and material form but it may circulate as blood in a man's veins without his knowledge. The effects of the movement may merge with his feelings and emotions, unknown to himself.

## **II F. Causes for the Rejection of Religion<sup>1</sup>**

Allah has expounded His religion unambiguously. A sombre reflection will convince a man of its truth. Notwithstanding this, not all men have accepted it. In every epoch innumerable people rejected it and even today the rejecters are in a majority. The Qur'an has monitored this negative response in detail. Anyone interested in the propagation of religion will stand to gain in many ways if he acquaints himself with the Qur'anic analysis of the causes leading to the rejection of faith.

(1) One may learn why God's religion is rejected and how the rejection may be remediated. Here only theoretical analysis is given but its application may not be difficult. In the light of this analysis it will be easy to ascertain who rejects religion and for what reasons, and how these can be removed.

(2) Sometimes an ideology is opposed with such ferocity that the steadfastness of its subscribers is terribly shaken. When the preacher knows that the religion of God has irrefutable proofs and that its opposition is motivated by blind emotions, then his belief increases

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(1) There are internal as well as external causes for the rejection of faith. In this chapter, internal causes are discussed. External causes have already been discussed in my book 'Islamic Solution to Human Issues'.

and he will present the religion with greater confidence.

(3) The reasons for the rejection of faith help us to understand at once why a certain person refutes it and on hindsight the believer can see his own defects. The believer may find out why he has not changed as much as the religion wants him to change and why he does not carry out the religious instructions in spite of being convinced that his religion is true. These defects are caused on a small scale by those factors which on a larger scale lead to the rejection of faith. This analysis provides a training manual for the believers too. The attitude of the volunteers of Islam towards religion should be radically different from that of the enemies of Islam bent upon its elimination. Otherwise they cannot become even true followers of Islam, let alone the possibility of their becoming interpreters and think-tanks of Islam.

These are the ancillary benefits. The main benefit of the causes is that the attitude of the rejecters can be shown to be unreasonable as there is no intellectual basis for their rejection of religion. They are going to face grave consequences as a result of their unreasonable attitude.

A few important causes are as follows:-

#### **(i) Domination of wrong doctrines**

The religion of God alone gives us true doctrines. Only wrong and false doctrines can be derived from other

sources. Anyone is obliged to adopt some wrong doctrine or other if he renounces the religion of God. If he does not realize the error in his chosen doctrine soon, he begins to justify his choice through hindsight. It is a purely psychological reaction. After clinging to a doctrine for a long time, man develops a liking for it and becomes fanatical about it. It is commendable if this strong bias is in favour of a true doctrine because he and others stand to gain by it. It is not commendable if this strong bias is in favour of a false doctrine because it will cause grievous harm to the holder of the bias and his society. After selecting a wrong doctrine, only a strong-willed and self-critical person can return to a true doctrine. Such persons are rare. After selecting a wrong doctrine, a person's orientation undergoes a change and all his energies are now directed towards the repudiation of God's religion and not towards its understanding. Even a trivial excuse is sufficient for repudiation. In the Qur'anic terminology, such a person is in the stranglehold of Satan, who hastens him on the wrong path and fraudulently lulls him into a state of complacency by making him believe that he is following the right path and that there are excellent reasons for the rejection of the religion of God.

وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ ۖ وَإِنَّهُمْ  
لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ ۝

*"If anyone withdraws himself from remembrance of the Most Gracious We appoint for him a Satan, to be an intimate companion to him. Such (Satans) really hinder them from the Path, but they think that they are being guided aright!"*  
(Qur'an 43: 36, 37)

Before revealing His religion, Allah did not eradicate all other rival ideologies. Instead, He retained them and allowed them to function along with His own religion. In this state of affairs alone lies the ordeal of man. This enables one to see who embraces the religion of God and who adopts an ideology hostile to it. Whenever the true religion made its appearance, false ideologies opposed it with all the force at their command and made every possible effort to eliminate it or to suppress it. The Qur'an confirms this point as follows:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَاطِئِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا ۚ وَكَوْشَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُهُمْ فَتَرَاهُمْ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾ وَاصْصَلِّ إِلَىٰ أَهْدَاهُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ ۖ لِيَرْضَوْهُ وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوا مَا هُمْ مُقْتَرِفُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

*"Likewise did We make for every Messenger an enemy - Satans among men and jinns, inspiring each other with flowery discourses by way of deception. If thy Lord had so willed, they would not have done it, so leave them and what they forge. To such (deceit) let the hearts of those incline, who have no faith in the Hereafter and let them delight in it, and let them earn from it what they may."*  
(Qur'an 6:112,113)

The religion of God had always been one but, in



different epochs, different ideologies had been opposing it. If a person makes a comparative study in all seriousness, he will conclude that every opposing ideology is an acknowledgement of the feebleness of human thought and that the religion of God alone guarantees salvation. God has endowed man with the faculty of ratiocination and discrimination between right and wrong and yet man refuses to think of alternatives under the obsession with wrong ideologies.

لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا ۖ وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا ۖ وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَا  
يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلَّغْنَا أَمْرًا ۖ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَافِقُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

*"They have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle, nay more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning)."* (Qur'an 7:179)

One who is fanatical about wrong ideologies will reject the religion of God offhand, even if a Messenger presents it before him. It is possible that he may keep his mouth shut on account of the strong proofs that the Messenger offers in support of the religion of God but the doors of his heart will not open to welcome the religion.

وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا فِيْ أَكْمُوتٍ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَا إِلَيْهِ وَفِيْ آذَانِنَا وَقْرٌ ۚ وَمِنْ بَيْنِنَا وَبَيْنِكَ  
حِجَابٌ فَأَعْمَلْنَا عَنِيْهِمْ ﴿١٨٠﴾

*They say: "Our hearts are under veils, (concealed) from that to which thou dost invite us, and in our ears is a deafness, and between us and thee is a screen: so*

*do thou (what thou wilt); for us, we shall do (what we will!)"*  
*(Qur'an 41:5)*

## **(ii) Fondness for errant behaviour**

Man's errant behaviour inhibits his acceptance of true religion. There is an inalienable link between a wrong attitude to life and wrong conduct in life as there is between a true attitude to life and its resultant good conduct. The merit or defect of a doctrine cannot be easily assessed on an academic or intellectual basis but it can be assessed in the light of what accrues from it. If the undesirable consequences of adopting a wrong line of thought make a person uneasy, then he will be in a better position to appreciate the significance of true religion. If a person is not ill-at-ease with the same consequences then it is difficult for such a person to pay attention to religion. A large number of people keep away from God's religion simply because they are not sensitive to the mischief and corruption, rife in their lives, on account of their wrong ideas; moral fabric is ruined, social life is corrupted, economic and political systems are dysfunctional. In spite of this state of affairs, there is no disaffection. In the words of the Qur'an, notwithstanding their mental and discriminatory powers, they are so mesmerized by Satan that their wrong ways appear extremely fascinating to them and they are under the illusion that what they are doing is very good.

وَرَيْنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَكَانُوا مُصْتَبِرِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

*"Satan made their deeds alluring to them, and kept them back from the Path, though they were keen-sighted."*  
(Qur'an 29:38)

The way to salvation for man is to accept sincerely the beliefs, the concept of morality, the etiquette of social life, the principles of economics and politics, the canons of justice that Islam propounds and to live in accordance with them. But when a man courts perdition under the misconception that his failed life is 'successful', who can rescue him from ruin?

أَفَمَنْ يُزَيِّنُ لَهُ سُوْءَ عَمَلِهِ فَرَاهُ حَسَنًا ۚ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

*"Is he, then, to whom the evil of his conduct made alluring, so that he looks upon it as good, (equal to one who is rightly guided)? For Allah leaves to stray whom He wills, and guides whom He wills.*

*So let not thy soul be vested in regret for them for Allah knows well all that they do!"*  
(Qur'an 35:8)

### (iii) Identification with the majority

It is not easy to accept Islam for those who prefer to see truth and falsehood not with their own eyes but through the eyes of others. The world calls the shots for them. They are totally attuned to the ways of the world. The inclination of the world decides and determines their

agreement or disagreement with regard to any ideology; they do not apply their minds and exercise their judgment in accepting or rejecting it. In their eyes what the world accepts is true and what it rejects is false. When the religion of God takes on contemporary systems of thought and establishes its truth irrefutably, they look around and wonder why the world does not accept it but they themselves do not muster up courage to embrace the religion of God and follow it and to give up their perverted theories, going against the world trend. They satisfy themselves by thinking that though the religion of God is apparently true, there must be something wrong in it because the world does not accept it; it is incredible that the whole world could go wrong and the truth should dawn upon only a handful of people! When the thinking goes down to this level that one prefers filth to purity just because of its quantum, how can one expect such a person to think high? Only such people are blessed enough to receive the religion of God who have refined tastes and sound thinking and accept the true religion for its own merits and not by taking a cue from the attitude of the world. The Qur'an says that the thinking of most of the people is not based on facts but on conjectures. So it will not be proper to accept falsehood simply because the majority has accepted it. The proper procedure will be to avoid the majority and to follow the truth. Otherwise one will go astray and the destination will elude one.

وَأِنْ تَطِيعُوا أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَيُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ ۚ وَأِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

*"Wert thou to follow the common run of those on earth, they will lead thee away from the way of Allah. They follow nothing but conjecture: they do nothing but lie."*

(Qur'an 6:116)

#### (iv) **Submissiveness towards misguided leaders**

The choice between truth and falsehood is to be made by each individual. But in practice many people leave this choice to be made by their leaders and guides. These guides may not be described as God but their orders are treated as though they have been issued by God. The right to determine what is true and what is false is exclusively reserved for them. The direction followed by them becomes the direction for the followers; it is impossible for them to proceed in the opposite direction. The judgment of the guides is final in every matter; the guides shepherd them in the direction of their choice.

Allah has shown the way of salvation through the Messengers. Now man has just two alternatives before him. One, he must directly acquaint himself with their teachings and live according to them and guide others towards them. Two, he must follow those people who will guide him to the way of the Messengers. The first alternative requires a competence which very few possess but the second alternative is not that difficult. Every man

can distinguish between one set of people who can lead others on the way of the Messengers and the second set of people who can turn others from that way. If an individual prefers to follow the second set of people, then it means he has closed the door of salvation upon himself and he will face all those dangerous consequences of opposing the prophets which history has recorded. If he is so overwhelmed by his leader as to follow him into hell, then no one can rescue him from hell and escort him to heaven. Man is duty bound to follow God's legislation; it is unfortunate if he obeys orders of men like himself as implicitly as though they are the orders of God!

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَابَهُمْ وَأَرْبَابَهُمْ آمِينَ لَا تَنْتَهِونَ اللَّهُ السَّبِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ  
وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحَٰنَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

*"They take their priests and their anchorites to be their lords beside Allah. And (they take as their Lord) Christ the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to worship but One God: There is no God but He. Praise and glory to Him: (far is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him)."* (Qur'an 9:31)

## (v) Prisoners of the Past

Many people are prisoners of the past. So it does not go well with them that any ideology should debunk their past history and heroes. It is easy for them to give up the truth coming from God but it is not easy for them to exile wrong traditions of the past from their lives. They love

both the merits and the defects of the past so much and are proud to repeat both instead of learning from the past. They discern in their esteemed icons of the past all sterling qualities like rationality, discernment, trustworthiness, abundant caution and rule out any possibility of any fault in them. For them all the past stands for truth and what the past does not sanction is evil. If the past had approved of a very wrong philosophy, it is approved by them too. If the undiscerning leaders of the past had not approved of a most reliable philosophy, they would not approve of it too. The Qur'an considers such an attitude reprehensible. According to it, the past is worthy of endearment provided it contains the light of the truth. Without it, the past is not a matter of pride but of regret. If a person rejects truth because his ancestors had rejected it, it means that, instead of growing wise by learning from their mistakes, he prefers to share their sad fate. One gets the religion of God after great sacrifices; he who is not prepared to disown obsolete traditions of the past does not deserve to get it. Man ought to love it instead of the past but it is regrettable that he loves the past and forgets the religion of God.

وَكَذَلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ الْإِسْلَامِ مُثْقَلُونَ ﴿١﴾ قُلْ أَوْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ بِإِهْدَىٰ مِنَّا وَبَجَدْتُمْ عَلَىٰ آبَائِكُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِهَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ لَكَاؤُونَ ﴿٢﴾ فَاتَّبَعْنَاهُمْ مِنْهُمْ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣﴾

*"Just in the same way, whenever We sent a Warner before thee to any people, the wealthy ones among them said: "We found our fathers following a certain religion, and we will certainly follow in their footsteps," He said: "What! Even if I brought you better guidance than that which ye found your fathers following?" They said: "For us, we deny that which ye (prophets) are sent with." So We exacted retribution from them: now see what was the end of those who rejected (Truth)!"*  
(Qur'an 43:23-25)

### (v) Love for the world

Man is ever absorbed in this world but Islam wants him to give priority to the Hereafter and not to get bogged down by the issues of success and failure in this world.

إِنَّمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ هِيَ دَائِمُ الْقَامِرِ

*"This life of the present is nothing but temporary enjoyment; it is the Hereafter that is the Home that will last."*  
(Qur'an 40:39)

Life here is a mirage but is misconceived by man to be the most definite and definitive reality. No higher reality exists for him to seek. This world is a perennial focal point and all his striving is dedicated to it. The Qur'an comments on it as follows:

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ

*"They know but the outer (things) in the life of this world: but of the Hereafter they are heedless."*

(Qur'an 30:7)



The Hereafter has a bearing upon many religious verities. These can be comprehended if man is prepared to ponder over them shifting his attention from this material world. Very few people are prepared for it. For many the Hereafter is a myth and many others entertain doubts about its ever coming into being. At present the Hereafter is invisible but the time is drawing near when it will be unmasked and man will tremble to see the horrible consequences of denying the possibility of the Hereafter. Then his sense of regret and frustration will be in vain. The time for rectification would have been over and the result would be staring him in the face.

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَعذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

*"So on that Day no excuse of theirs will avail the transgressors, nor will they be allowed to make amends."*

(Qur'an 30:57)

### **(vii) Abundance of Material Resources**

Sometimes, abundance of worldly resources and material comforts hinders acceptance of truth. Wallowing in wealth, man loses the emotion of submissiveness and is emboldened to disobey God. Living in luxury, man rejects God's guidance as though God is not his King and he is not His subject. In spite of several reminders, man refuses to desist from disobedience until the divine law of retribution crushes him.

وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا ۖ وَإِذَا أَرَادْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا  
مُشْرِقِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ فَدَمَرْنَاهَا تَدْمِيرًا ۝

*"Nor would We punish until We had sent a messenger (to give warning). When we decide to destroy a town, We command those among them who are given the good things of life (to be obedient) but they continued to transgress; so that the word is proved true against them: then we destroy them utterly." (Qur'an 17: 15,16)*

Affluence deceives a person to think that Truth is on his side and sometimes even to think that he reserves the right to speak on behalf of Truth. He identifies his order with God's order and opposition to him with opposition to God. He thinks it is *infra dig* for him to point out to a poor person his mistakes and to guide him. If some poor person dares to convey the message of truth to him, he rejects it contemptuously. He is convinced and tries to convince others that possession of wordly comforts is a proof of his being in the right. If he had been in error, God would not have been so affectionate towards him and blessed him with wealth and honours. He sees that his critics are not above want and their poverty is a proof that their way of living has not been approved by God. He looks upon his critics as liars and refuses to obey them fearing self-destruction. His reaction is similar to the reaction of Noah's affluent critics. The Qur'an describes the reaction as follows:

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَالْآخِرَةُ وَ أَشْرَقْنَاهُمْ فِي

الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ يَأْكُلُ مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَشْرَبُ  
مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ ۚ وَلَئِنْ أَطَعْتُمْ بَشَرًا مِثْلَكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَخُوسُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

*"And the chiefs of his people, who disbelieved and denied the Meeting in the Hereafter, and on whom We had bestowed the good things of this life, said, "He is no more than a man like yourselves: he eats and drinks of what ye drink. If ye obey a man like yourselves, behold, it is certain ye will be lost."*  
(Qur'an 23:33,34)

In every nation and every epoch, leaders have displayed the same frame of mind. Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) had to confront the same line of thinking from his opponents.

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾

*"They say: Why is not this Qur'an sent down to some leading man in either of the two (chief) cities (Makkah and Taif)?"*  
(Qur'an 43:31)

There is no dearth of people who believe in such irrational statements. They do not study Truth as Truth; instead they see the financial status of the person who presents it and determine their reaction accordingly. They can easily reject Truth if a poor and obscure person presents it but if the chiefs invite them towards unambiguous evil, they will not reject it but lap it up. It is beyond their comprehension that a person, deprived of comforts and worldly goods, could be the custodian of truth and those who own crown and throne, wealth and power could be unfamiliar with truth! This foolish way of

thinking leads to rejection of truth and does not protect them from punitive consequences. History bears witness that such people did not remain safe.

وَنَادَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ قَالَ يُقَوْمُ أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَهَذِهِ الْأَنْهَارُ  
تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِي ۖ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ أَمْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَٰذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ ۚ  
وَلَا يَكْذُوبِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَلَوْلَا أُلْقِيَ عَلَيْهِ أَسْوَأَ الَّذِي قَدْ دَٰخَلَ أَعْيُنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
مَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَاسْتَحَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَأَطَاعُوهُ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَلَمَّا  
أَسْفُونَا إِنَّهُمْ لَتَقْبَضُوا مِن مَّهْمِنَا ۚ فَاجْعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَفًا وَمَثَلًا لِّلْآخِرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

*"And Pharaoh proclaims among his people, saying:*

*"O my people! Does not the dominion of Egypt belong to me, (witness) these streams flowing underneath my (palace)? What! See ye not then? Am I not better than this (Moses), who is a contemptible wretch and can scarcely express himself clearly? Then why are not gold bracelets bestowed on him, or (why) come (not) with him angels accompanying him in procession?" Thus did he make fools of his people, and they obeyed him: truly were they a people rebellious (against Allah). When at length they provoked Us, We exacted retribution from them, and We drowned them all. And We made them (a people) of the past and an example to later ages."*

*(Qur'an 43:51-56)*

### **(viii) Political Power and Government**

Men of power have generally rejected the religion of God. They thought it would pose a danger to their power and so opposed it. They looked upon their benefactor who tried to protect them from God's punishment as their

political rival. He would give strong proofs in support of the truth of God's religion but they would reject it saying it was political strategy to capture power. In the selflessness of a most sincere messenger with no axe to grind they would detect ambition for political power and assert,

إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ يُرَادُّ

*"This is truly a thing designed (against you)! (38:6).*

According to the Pharaoh, Prophets like Moses and Aaron hankered after political power and their mission had no other objective than to capture the government.

قَالُوا إِنَّ هَذَيْنِ لَسُحْرَانِ يُرِيدَانِ أَنْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِمَا وَيَذْهَبَا بِطَرِيقَتِكُمُ الْمُثَلَّى ۝

*"They said: These two are certainly (expert) magicians: their object is to drive you out from your land with their magic, and to do away with your most cherished way."*

(20:63)

A similar charge is made as follows:

قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا لِنَعْبُدَكَ عَمَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا وَتَكُونُ لَكُمُ الْكِبْرِيَاءُ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ وَمَا نَحْنُ لَكُمُ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

*"They said, Hast thou come to us to turn us away from the ways we found our fathers following - in order that thou and thy brother may have greatness in the land? But not we shall believe in you!"*

(Qur'an 10:78)

### (ix) Self Pampering

Self-gratification is a hindrance in the acceptance of

God's religion. Physical comfort is given top priority in the scheme of things. Physical discomfort inhibits every initiative. A self-pampering person avoids any brush with thorns fearing the loss of peace of mind. In spite of knowing the religion of God to be true, he does not accept it, because it disturbs his physical comfort. The religion of God is very sensitive and so distances itself from the person who superciliously rejects God's religion after understanding it fully. When a man surrenders to his physical comfort, God dismisses him and he will die a slave to self and not a slave to God.

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَصْلَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَ  
قَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

*"Then seest thou such a one as takes as his God his own vain desire? Allah has, knowing (him as such), left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart (and understanding), and put a cover on his sight. Who, then, will guide him after Allah (has withdrawn guidance)? Will ye not receive admonition?"*

(Qur'an 45:23)

## (x) Arrogance

Arrogance causes rebellion against God. Satan disobeyed the order of God to prostrate before Adam and this disobedience was due to arrogance, according to the Qur'an. Arrogance is an exaggerated notion about one's own self. This notion manifests itself in two ways - rejection of truth and underestimation of people. Satan

embodied both qualities. He treated Adam with contempt and disobeyed God's order.

An arrogant man disobeys God too. The nature and degree of disobedience reflect the nature and degree of arrogance. The peak of arrogance matches the peak of disobedience to God. A sense of pride prevents man from submitting to God and demands status not granted by God. The psychological nature of an arrogant person differs vastly from that of an obedient and faithful servant of God. The latter obeys God because He is the Lord and the King but the arrogant person acknowledges no authority higher than himself. Obedience to God hurts his sense of pride and he feels that he is free from every control and condition.

An arrogant man wants the highest position in society and cannot brook a rival. He is proud of his intellect, discernment, and sagacity even though he has gone astray from the right path. Like a blind man he trips and falls but his arrogance prevents him from reassessing his conduct. He imagines that it is impossible for truth to be hidden from him and to be revealed to somebody else, and that every virtue will be known to and accessed by him first. He is not prepared to acknowledge that another person may be good. Culture and decency belong to him or people of his ilk. He considers all those who invite him to accept God's religion or reprimand him for his profligacy to be meanest and most mischievous people.

He cannot tolerate any man to be superior enough to advise him and to explain how wrong he is. He is prepared to persist in error until his death but he is not prepared to accept advice and rectify conduct. When a man's arrogance reaches the highest level of self-centredness, he cannot harm the religion of God but it will become a sealed and inaccessible truth to him.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي آيَاتِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ سُلْطَانٍ أَتَاهُمْ إِنْ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ إِلَّا  
كِبْرٌ مَّا هُمْ بِبَالِغِيهِ ۖ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿٥٦﴾

*"Those who dispute about the Signs of Allah without any authority bestowed on them, - there is nothing in their breasts but (the quest of) greatness which they shall never attain to: seek refuge, then, in Allah: it is He who hears and sees (all things)."* (Qur'an 40:56)

### (xi) Demand for a revised version of Faith

When the truth of an ideology is established beyond a shadow of doubt, the only reasonable course open to man is to take the initiative in embracing it and to reject all other viewpoints running counter to it. But many people do not adopt such a reasonable course with regard to the religion of God. Instead, they oppose it tooth and nail with no holds barred. In spite of it, When the opposition loses steam and grows weaker, they neither reject it thoroughly nor accept it in its authentic form, but seek a revised version which accommodates their wrong but pet theories and viewpoints. Their earnest endeavour



is to simultaneously satisfy the urges of the self and the service to God through the revised version of the Faith even though the religion of God demands undivided loyalty and no man however eminent he may be, not even God's Messenger, enjoys that privilege which entitles him to edit or alter wilfully and wantonly the divine version of Faith and follow it according to his whims and fancies.

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٌ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا إِنَّمَا يَنْتَهِزُ بِرْءَانٍ  
غَيْرِ هَٰذَا أَوْ بَدِّلْهُ قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُ لِي مِنْ تَلْقَائِي نَفْسِي ۚ إِنْ  
أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُؤْتَىٰ إِلَيَّ ۚ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ٥

*"But when Our clear Signs are rehearsed unto them, those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, say: 'Bring us a Qur'an other than this, or change this.' Say: 'It is not for me, of my own accord, to change it: I follow naught but what is revealed unto me: if I were to disobey my Lord, I should myself fear the chastisement of a Great Day (to come).'"*

*(Qur'an 10:15)*

Those who return to the religion of God without abandoning its antithesis demonstrate in reality that they do not love it but love themselves, their desires, and wrong thoughts and views which it proposes to eliminate. Its advent is not to make a compromise with its antithesis but to trample upon it and triumph. To keep company with Truth one has to part company with non-Truth.

## II. G. They Discover the Treasure of Islam

In this world some discover the religion of God and some others do not. This observation may not sound significant at present, even though success belongs to the former group and it does not belong to the latter. This great discovery is not a case of serendipity but the result of a deliberate choice. When the truth of Islam dawns upon some people and they come forward and accept it, it is because they possess certain qualities which glue them to Islam and consequently they cannot think of life without it. The Qur'an explains what those qualities are.

### 1. Pure and Untutored Human Nature

The religion of God is in keeping with the true human nature. The likes and dislikes are the same for both. The religion of God makes no unfamiliar and unacceptable demands upon man. Its demands are the same as those of human nature. The Qur'an says,

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ  
لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ ۚ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾

*"So set thou thy face truly to the religion being  
upright, the nature in which Allah has made mankind:*

*No change (there is) in the work (wrought) by Allah:  
that is the true religion: but most mankind know not."*

*(Qur'an 30:30)*

If the truth of a religion can be summed up in two words, they are 'monotheism' and 'justice'. Belief in One God, and in the uniqueness of His person and attributes, and exclusive worship for Him will constitute 'Monotheism'. Justice stands for balanced dealings with people and upholding equity. Both these qualities are a part of human nature but when it is corrupted, these qualities become unacceptable.

There are many internal and external causes which distort human nature. On account of these causes it becomes possible for man to deny the existence of God or to believe in many gods. True human nature abhors injustice and brutality but wrong factors pervert it. So it can be safely assumed that unless his nature is suppressed, a human being cannot reject the religion of God and its teachings. If this suppression is not there, he will hasten towards Islam like a child towards its mother or a thirsty person towards water.

If human nature retains its pristine purity, then a human being will no longer hesitate to become a Muslim. Moreover, he will be eager to become a preacher of Islam. The owner of untampered nature will not be content with any other ideology and will not tolerate any deviation from and disregard of Islam. This untampered

state of human nature is described as 'Qalb-e-Saleem' in the Qur'an. Prophet Abraham is mentioned in the following verses.

إِذْ جَاءَ رَبَّهُ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ۝ إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَاذَا تَعْبُدُونَ ۝ أَإِنِّي الْهَيْئَةُ دُونَ اللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ ۝ فَمَا ظَنُّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

*"Behold, he approached his Lord with a sound heart. Behold, he said to his father and to his people." What is that which ye worship? Is it a falsehood - gods other than Allah that ye desire? Then what is your idea about the Lord of the worlds?" (Qur'an 37:84-87)*

The Qur'an narrates how Prophet Abraham rejected the false gods and how steadfast and sacrificing he was. Any other person with 'Qalb-e-Saleem' will behave as Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) behaved. This attitude is not without risk but it contains the key to salvation.

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ۝ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ۝

*"The Day wherever neither wealth nor sons will avail, but only he (will prosper) that brings to Allah a sound heart." (Qur'an 26:88,89)*

## 2. Meditative Quality

If a person tries to learn about the religion of Islam, he will find access to it. If this attempt does not appeal to him, the religion will not come to him of its own accord. That is why the Qur'an says,

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۝

*"When the Qur'an is read, listen to it with attention and hold your peace: that ye may receive mercy."*

*(Qur'an 7:204)*

The religion of God is neither a myth nor an illusion to be discarded. It contains enough material for meditation. It not only claims to be true but provides facts and figures in support of its claim and invites people to ponder over them.

كُتِبَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ۝

*"(Here is) a Book which we have sent down unto thee, full of blessings, that they may meditate on its signs, and that men of understanding may receive admonition."*

*(Qur'an 38:29)*

Man realizes his own greatness through meditation on the religion of God and consequently comes closer to it. The chief defect of the denigrators is that they do not meditate on it. It is not possible for a man of understanding to reject it. The rejection is possible if he is not willing to meditate or has already made up his mind not to accept it. The Qur'an asks in wonder how they can reject it when rationality invites man to accept it.

أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ۝

*"Do they not then earnestly seek to understand the Qur'an, or is it that there are locks upon their hearts?"*

*(Qur'an 47:24)*

Islam accords with the ultimate reach of knowledge.

Man has not discovered anything which contradicts Islam or its teachings. The Qur'an declares that philosophers and scientists will not encounter any mental conflict if they decide to accept Islam. They embrace Islam willingly and bear testimony to its truth.

وَيَذَرَى الَّذِينَ أُؤْتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ

*"And those to whom knowledge has come see that the (Revelation) sent down to thee from thy Lord - that is the Truth."*  
(Qur'an 34:6)

The religion of God is not a complicated system of philosophy for whose understanding prodigious amounts of intellect are required. It has been revealed as a book with clarity as its characteristic. It tells man what it wants and what it does not want, what man's real status is and how he can attain salvation. It is never vague about all these facts; it uses simple, plain and lucid language. Everyone can understand according to the level of his mental ability and benefit by it.

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ الْكِتَابَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عِوَجًا

*"Praise be to Allah, who hath sent to His servant the Book, and hath allowed therein no crookedness."*

(Qur'an 18:1)

There is no hindrance in the way of understanding the religion of God because it has so presented itself. Now man has to decide whether to understand it or to divert his mind to some other job.

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٧﴾

*"And We have indeed made the Qur'an easy to understand and remember: then is there any that will receive admonition?"*  
(Qur'an 54:17)

Mere contemplation, it should be noted, will not automatically lead to the discovery of Islam. For this to happen, contemplation should be free from all kinds of prejudices because prejudice tends to exclude all other criteria and prevents the heart from accepting the truth even after discovering it in the religion of God. The Jews in the sixth century Christian era behaved with Islam in the same manner. They recognised the religion of God with the same conviction with which a father recognizes his child. In spite of it, their majority rejected Islam because Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) was not a Jew. At the same time there were others in their midst for whom the religion of God ranked higher than nationality and genealogy and when they came across Islam they recognised its truth and tearfully prayed that their testimony should be accepted, and that they should find a place among the witnesses of His religion.

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَى أَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ وَمَا  
عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

*"And when they listen to the revelation received by the Messenger, thou wilt see their eyes overflowing with tears, for they recognise the truth: they pray: Our*

*Lord! We believe, write us down among the witnesses."*  
(Qur'an 5:83)

Love of this world and obsession with the comforts of this world take so much of his time and efforts that man has no time to spare for undisturbed contemplation over the religion of God. Another distraction is intoxication with power. As long as this intoxication lasts, man pays no heed to religion. There are other distractions too. (Vide Chapter II F) If a man retains his capacity to see, recognise and comprehend truth, he hastens towards the Faith as though hurdles were non-existent. On account of this capacity the Queen of Sheba embraced the Faith. On the contrary, the absence of this capacity kept the Pharaoh arrogant and he imagined that he was too great to bow his head before anyone. The Qur'an's comment is relevant here.

إِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمِعُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تَسْمِعُ الْقُمْمَ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ ۖ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَادٍ الْعُمْيَ عَنْ ضَلَالَتِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ تَسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْمِعُونَ ۚ

*"Truly thou canst not cause the dead to listen, nor canst thou cause the deaf to hear the call, (especially) when they turn back in retreat. Nor cast thou be a guide to the blind, (to prevent them) from straying: only those wilt thou get to listen who believe in Our signs, so they submit."*  
(Qur'an 27:80; 81)

The above quoted verse deals with the issue of getting people to listen. The dead, the deaf and the blind have forfeited the capacity to listen. The genuine listeners



listen to the call of Truth and respond to it, their conscience is strong and sharp, they do not close their ear-drums, they make an effort to understand what is being told. This competence of the genuine listeners is life, according to the Qur'an. People endowed with this life discover and choose Islam. Without this life, a human being is a living corpse and even the prophets cannot reach such a person. The prophet and the revelation are meant for the living.

لِيُنْذِرَ مَنْ كَانَ حَيًّا وَيُحْيِيَ الْقَوْلَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

*"It may give admonition to any (who are) alive, and that the word may be proved true against those who reject (Truth)."*  
(Qur'an 36:70)

### 3. A Study of the past opens their eyes

To reject the religion of God is to invite His punishment. The rejecting nations were ruined in the past and no power could save them. An individual studying the history of such nations cannot but learn a lesson and he will then not dare to reject the religion of God. As soon as he hears that call, he will make haste towards it and accept it happily. The Qur'an points it out.

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا فَنَقَّبُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ هَلْ مِنْ مَحْيُوسٍ ۝ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرٍ لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ ۝

*"But how many generations before them did We destroy (for their sins), stronger in power than they? Then did they wander through the land: was there any*

*place to escape (for them)? Verily in this is a message for any that has a heart and understanding or who gives ear and is a witness."* (Qur'an 50:36,37)

By nature man is ever desirous of salvation. No one prefers perdition. So history's warnings must make him wiser. Sometimes man comes under the spell of indifference and insensitivity. He turns a deaf ear to history's warnings and in spite of the desire to avoid perdition proceeds along its path. At last he becomes a source of warning to the future generations like many others who opposed the true Faith.

فَكَأَيُّ مَن قَرَّبَهُ أَهْلُكُنْهَا وَ هِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ فَعَيَّ حَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا وَ بُدِّ  
مُعْطَلَةٌ وَ قَصْرٌ مَّشِيدٌ ۝ أَكَلَمَ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَلَوْنَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبُ  
يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ أَدَانُ يَسْعُونَ بِهَا فَأَنَّهُ لَا تَعَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعَى  
الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ ۝

*"How many populations have We destroyed, which were given to wrong-doing? They tumbled down on their roofs. And how many wells are lying idle and neglected, and castles lofty and well-built? Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts (and minds) may thus learn wisdom and their ears may thus learn to hear? Truly it is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts which are in their breasts."*

(Qur'an 22:45,46)

#### 4. Seek Religion and Find it

The seeker gets the religion of God. If there is no urge within for it, he will remain without it. This is the

rule in a matter of this nature.

يَهْدِي إِلَى اللَّهِ مَنْ أَنَابَ

*"He guideth to Himself those who turn to Him in penitence."*

(Qur'an 13:27)

There is such a tremendous vacuum in human life without the religion of God that the need for it should make him more restless than he would be for food when hungry. This is not applicable to a person accustomed to leading an insensitive life. Factors causing this vacuum can be addressed only by the religion of God and by nothing else.

1. Every man is eager to know if he has a Creator, Owner, Master and God, and if he has, what is the nature of his relationship with Him. The religion of God gives such a correct and satisfactory reply to this question that a discerning person will spontaneously acknowledge its truth and express his relief on finding the right answer.

2. Man requires law. However, whenever he tried to meet this requirement on his own, he failed miserably. It is a fact that in man-made laws there is no balance and no evenness. If one thing is there, another thing is absent. This is not the case with the religion of God as it is free from deficiency and excess and marked by equilibrium. If man compares his lop-sided legislation with the divine one, his inner voice will be convinced of the divinity of the latter. In spite of it, if he does not feel the urge for the

religion of God, then there is no way it could be internalised by him.

3. Death is hanging like an unsheathed sword over each man. No one can predict when the span of life would end and death would arrive. No one can foresee what will happen after death. This question worries every thinking man. He would like to know if there is any lurking danger after death, and if there is, how is he to protect himself. All this he wants to know in order to spend the short duration of life undisturbed and in peace. The religion of God informs him that after death there is eternal success or failure and this success depends on the acceptance of the religion of God and its rejection entails inescapable failure. This information is furnished so reiteratively, forcefully and vigorously that it is not possible for man to ignore it.

These factors inevitably lead to an urge in man for the religion of God. A man with this urge will this urge will definitely get to it because it is against the mercy of God to let a seeker after His religion live and die in a state of irreligiosity.

## **5. Those who dare win it**

He who dares to champion the cause of truth against falsehood, to accept the true religion at any cost, to renounce for its sake the greatest benefit, honour, status and asset, to sacrifice life on demand for its sake will be

privileged to gain the religion of God. An ordinary man will uphold Islam if he has grit and determination by God's grace. If this quality is not there, even a great philosopher or a great monarch will not be deemed worthy of Islam. An example of this is found in the story of the magicians who came to oppose Moses. The Pharaoh assured them that they would get exalted posts if they overwhelmed Moses. When they realized that Moses was no magician but a caller unto Truth and a Messenger of God, They regretted their opposition to Moses and became his followers. They were not ignorant of the consequences of their action. They knew that they would be targeted by the Pharaoh's wrath. They did not care and they were ready to endure any hardship. When the Pharaoh held out the threat that he would mutilate their bodies and crucify them, the Qur'an records their reply:

قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْثِرَكَ عَلَىٰ مَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالَّذِي فَطَرَنَا فَاقْضِ مَا أَنْتَ قَاضٍ ۖ إِنَّمَا تَقْعُصُ هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ۚ إِنَّا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّنَا لِيَغْفِرَ لَنَا خَطِئَنَا وَمَا أَكْرَهْتَنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ السِّحْرِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ وَابِلٌ ۝

*"They said: Never shall we prefer thee to what has come to us of the clear signs Him who created us! So decree whatever thou desirest to decree: for thou canst only decree (touching) the life of this world. For us, we have believed in our Lord: may He forgive us our faults, and the magic to which thou didst compel us: for Allah is Best and Most Abiding."* (Qur'an 20: 72,73)

On seeing the religion of God, a less courageous

person begins to panic. It is not easy for them who say,

وَقَالُوا إِن تَتَّبِعِ الْهُدَى مَعَكَ تُخْطَفُ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا

*"If we were to follow the guidance with thee we should  
be snatched away from our land," (Qur'an 28:57)*

to accept the religion of God. They prefer peace and contentment. The religion of God is meant for those who dare to face risks.

It is a fact that men of courage alone have always welcomed the religion of God. When they have embraced it, they cease to bother about gaining any other thing or losing it. For a man of less courage, even a trivial possession appears to be a thing of immense value and he will not be prepared to lose it. As a result, he will not muster courage to embrace Islam.



*Chapter III***A. Essential Attributes for the  
Missionary Work**

Islam is a message. It is the responsibility of those who accept it to spread it throughout the world and this endeavour will persist as long as there is even one man rejecting it on the face of the earth. To carry on this noble task there should be noble attributes which Islam proposes to promote in its propagator. The presence of such attributes proves that his life has been cast in the mould of Islam and will enable him to carry the burden of his mission as these attributes constitute its wherewithal, and huge capital and foster strong character, robust dynamism and ardent zeal. Without them he will be like a weak and unarmed person sent to the battle front, with no prospect of displaying heroism or of defeating the enemy or even of prolonging the resistance for a considerable duration.

The attributes which Islam requires are not fully encompassed here. The significance of a few of them is touched upon from the practical point of view. An idea can be formed from this about the mental training that Islam favours and what attributes are essential to render



service to Islam.

## **A:- Belief in Allah**

### **(i) Belief in Allah is the Foundation of Faith**

Belief in Allah is the foundation of His religion and a distinguishing mark between a believer and a non-believer. Man can lead his life either as a worshipper of Allah or as a follower of Satan. Any path that runs counter to the way Allah has shown is Satan's path which never reaches Allah. Islam proposes to make you a worshipper of God and the first step towards it is belief. If this belief is true and sincere, the soul is redolent with piety and the whole life pervades with the worship of God. The worshipper breaks away from Tagut, the icon of evil, and establishes contact with God.

فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا  
انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾

*"Whoever rejects Tagut and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things."*

*(Qur'an 2:256)*

### **(ii) The Essential Implications of the Belief in Allah**

Belief in Allah implies voluntary and total self-surrender to Allah to the exclusion of all other sources of domination. The whole life is dedicated to Him and it has no other objective. This belief is a pledge

of servility to Allah and submission to His commandments. The believer demonstrates his loyalty to God throughout his life. He proceeds along the lines defined by God and he will not proceed along the way prohibited by God. Every activity will conform to His directions. In His will is the believer's peace. No writ contrary to God's will can compel the believer's submission.

### **iii) Belief is a pledge of allegiances**

This pledge of allegiance takes away your sense of possession. Everything you own now belongs to God. Your mind is pledged to God. You will think how to seek His pleasure; you will worry about securing His approval. You will remember Allah alone. Allah will dominate your emotions. The motive for happiness and sorrow will be God. You live for the love of God and you lay down your life for the love of God. If Allah orders, you will embrace your sworn enemy; if Allah so wills, you will disown your own children. Allah rules over your days and nights. You will keep away from every engagement that distances you from God. Day in, day out others enjoy themselves, but for you every moment is an opportunity to seek God's approval, which is your be-all. Proximity to God is the motive behind your endeavours. Under all conditions you will remain an embodiment of submission to God. Your soul will be drenched in the longing for

Allah's pleasure. Your noblest wish will be to appear before Allah as the best slave on the Day of judgment. After sacrificing everything in the way of Allah, the cry from the heart and the trembling lips will be: O Lord! I have presented you whatever I had to you. Be gracious enough to accept.

إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

*"My prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds."*

(Qur'an 6:162)

To believe in God is to be a slave of God; to be a slave of God is a very high designation. It is not easy to attain this status. Allah grants this status to him who dedicates his heart and life to Him. If you are prepared to surrender your time, your precious assets, your finest skills to Allah, then He is ready to take you under his employ. The high status of being a servant is secured through total sacrifice and surrender. If you are not inclined towards it and you give secondary position to being a servant of God, then it is a defective servility which is not acceptable. Many businessmen have diversified business. They concentrate on the main business. They spend their spare time on another business of less importance. Service to God cannot be treated as something of ancillary importance. If it is your main concern, then your whole life has to be spent in the bargain. If you propose to live like a servant of Allah

sincerely, then surrender yourself wholly to Him. It is not in the fitness of things that a slave of one master would like to be a slave of another master even for a second. You can never be certified as a slave of Allah when you spare only your spare time for His service and when the lion's share of service goes to somebody else. Allah is highly sensitive and jealous in this matter. He cannot brook any rival and is disgusted with a servant fond of serving Him and others equally. He prefers that slave who breaks all chains to put on the exclusive yoke of His slavery.

If a person does not allow God the power of final arbitration in any matter, then he has not entered the service of God in the real sense. If a person does not renounce his own wish, and does not surrender everything to God, he does not become a slave of God. The demand of Allah is not for partial but total servility.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾

*"O ye who believe! Enter into Islam whole-heartedly; and follow not the footsteps of the Satan for he is to you an avowed enemy."*

*(Qur'an 2:208)*

#### **(iv) Loyalty and Treachery are poles apart**

Sometimes man thinks he is rich in faith but his life is without the spirit of piety. He declares that God is his master but he is not enthusiastic over his service to God.

He claims to believe in God but sacrifice for Him is distasteful. He declares love for God but love for the world pervades his being. He utters the name of Allah again and again but there is no rule of Allah over him. This is a clear case of self-contradiction. The twain-love for the world and love for Allah-can never meet. Man's bosom cannot accommodate at once both fear of Allah and fear of others. How can the human least be full of faith in Allah and devoid of the desire for sacrifice for Him at the same time? Belief is that power which puts the knife in the obedient father's hand targeting the patient son's throat, and which makes the son obedient go God stand up against his misguided father, and which strengthens man's relationship with God more than his genealogical link, and which deepens love for God after eliminating love for mammon, and which enables a person to break his bondage to hearth and home, kith and kin, community and nation to secure Allah's pleasure.

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءُؤُا مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ

*"There is for you an excellent example (to follow) in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people: We are clear of you and of whatever ye worship besides Allah: we have rejected you, and there has arisen, between us and you, enmity and hatred for ever, - unless ye believe in Allah and Him alone."*

(Qur'an 60:4)

Belief makes a human being a sincere and loyal servant of Allah. Nobody else is God or co-God for him. Non-truth cannot enslave his heart. He is wholly enslaved to God. Falsehood can deceive a person who is unfamiliar with truth. When truth is unveiled, the influence of falsehood is eroded. If falsehood continues to call the shots, it means truth still lies concealed. When a man is convinced that he is a servant of Allah and any conduct other than servility to Him is inappropriate, then how can he rebel against God? Belief quickens and revives even a failing heart and so belief and fatal lethargy cannot co-exist in the human heart. Belief is not just a viewpoint springing and dying in the mind but a revolutionary doctrine bringing about a total transformation of the human personality and enslaving him to one God only.

#### **(v) Traditional Belief and Genuine Belief**

There is no doubt that God has blessed us greatly by providing us with a family and environment conducive to Islam. In another environment we do not know if we would have uttered even the name of God. Still belief is not something that has to be adopted under the influence of the environment. Belief is the result of the application of the mind. It is not a hereditary commodity but wealth well-earned. However, it has to be conceded that technically speaking a person declaring faith in God and

the Prophet under the influence of the home and the environment cannot be described as a Kafir. He who believes in the basic tenets of Islam is a Muslim. Nobody has a right to excommunicate him but it is also a fact such a faith acquired under the domestic influence cannot fully transform a human being, and cannot tear asunder the veil of polytheism and disbelief. Such a faith lacks that spirit which enters into a man and grants him a new existence. When man responds to the call of Truth, his life is blessed with faith. To be deprived of such a life implies that he has not heard the call of Truth or that he has not yet responded to it.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ

*"O ye who believe! Give your response to Allah and His Messenger, when He calleth you to that which will give you life."*

(Qur'an 8:24)

Belief bears fruit when it is a conscious choice. Hereditary faith does not yield a rich harvest. If you do not spare time to answer questions like, Does God exist? If so, what does He want?, then it means you are content to toe the line of family tradition and are least bothered to make your belief genuine and conscious. Then you should not expect excellent results which are associated with the faith of deliberate choice. Traditional faith comes as an inheritance; conscious faith comes as a revolution. If you prefer the former, you cannot get the latter. To get the latter, faith and conviction must strike

deep roots in you and must inform your thoughts and actions.

Every revolution is based on some proof. An unsubstantiated claim cannot change a person, it can only trigger short-lived ardour, it cannot provide the power to keep man continuously active. Moreover, it renders man cowardly. A substantiated claim makes a person bold and resolute. No man makes a sacrifice for a dubious cause. If you are convinced of the truth of a cause, sacrifice comes easy for you. You will not grieve to lose all, even the world, for its sake. Your future and your children's future will not worry you. The question of compensation for your sacrifices also will not worry you. The rationally chosen objective will ever remain in focus, making your bosom warm and propelling your resolution. There will be no excuse for indifference and insensitivity. No other interest will be so overriding as to put this objective on the backburner.

This is true of the belief in God. If your mind has deliberately subscribed to it, your thoughts and actions will not be lulled to sleep and you will not cease to be restive. Where there is fire, there is heat. More true is it to say, where there is faith, there cannot be the silence of the grave. The Qur'an narrates the history of the prophets. They did not follow the beaten track blindly, they stuck to their standpoint on account of their enlightenment. Every statement of theirs was substantiated. They always



commenced their mission with the claim that God has given them proofs. These proofs were so powerful as to make the history of the prophets a history of constant endeavours, sacrifice, and iron resolution.

#### **(vi) Distinction between Faith and Hypocrisy**

In proportion to the strength of the belief in God, there will be the strength of character. If the belief in God weakens, its effect will be felt in character too. With weakened belief, strong character cannot be expected. Vigilance against the weakness of faith is necessary. If this weakness is not remedied in time, it may degenerate into hypocrisy which endangers faith. If one is infected with hypocrisy, and the infection grows strong, then such a person will not be sincere and dedicated in the matter of faith and will remain confused and uncertain, caught between faith and disbelief. If he takes one step forward, he will go ten steps backward. He will not be prepared to bear any hardship for the sake of the truth he has recognised. He will remain cowardly and irresolute. As against this, a believer will have strength of conviction, courage and resolve, steadfastness and constancy and the wisdom to live and die for Truth. Faith emboldens a person to confront forces of hostility and he does not hesitate to lay down life and wealth at its altar. A study of chapter 33, verses 9 to 27 is very illuminating in this connection. In the Battle of the Trench/ Confederates,

enemy hordes descended on Madinah from the north and the south. They were in large numbers, highly motivated to fight to the finish, and armed to the teeth. Weak Muslims were scared out of their wits on this awesome display of military might and they began to doubt whether God's help would come or His promise would be fulfilled. What hypocrites said on the occasion betrayed their bias. They said that the hope of Islam's global triumph was being belied and that their very lives were in danger.

مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿٣٣﴾

*"Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusions."* (Qur'an 33:12)

A group of these hypocrites was urging their friends not to stay in Madinah but to return to their native places in order to escape from physical liquidation.

To hide their hypocrisy some people offered excuses like 'our houses are not safe and remain open and so we may be permitted to withdraw from the frontline.' The Qur'an says وَمَا هِيَ بِأَعْوَابَةٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ (In reality, their houses were not unsafe). Defence of women and children had already been secured. The excuse was meaningless. ﴿٣٥﴾ إِنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تَقْرَأُوا ﴿٣٦﴾ "They intended nothing but to run away (33:13)

The Qur'an predicted that if Madinah were to be invaded from four sides, the hypocrites would become

apostates. The Qur'anic comment is significant.

وَلَقَدْ كَانُوا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ قَبْلُ لَا يُؤْثِرُونَ الْأَدْبَارَ ۚ وَكَانَ عَهْدُ اللَّهِ  
مَسْئُولًا ۝

*"And yet they already covenanted with Allah not to turn their backs, and a covenant with Allah must (surely) be answered for."* (Qur'an 33:15)

Islam is a pledge of steadfastness and service through sacrifice under all circumstances. By becoming Muslims, the hypocrites had given this pledge. Some of them had not participated in the battles of Badr and Uhad and so gave an assurance that in any forthcoming battle they would compensate for this non-participation and would not lag behind others in feats of courage. They openly went against this assurance at the most critical juncture and so they would be asked to explain their conduct in Allah's court.

It was stated about the hypocrites: **أَبْغَضُ إِلَيْكُمْ** (Covetous over you) (Qur'an 33:19) It means that they had no sympathy for the poor, the needy, and the have-nots. They were not prepared to spend their money. They did not financially support the spread and triumph of religion. They were not willing to take part personally or financially in Jihad or in preparation for it.

At the same time they were covetous for goods. **أَبْغَضُ** (33:19) When there was a mention of war, their eyes rolled in fear of death and they looked at the

Prophet. After the threat of war was over and the booty of war was being distributed, they waxed eloquent about their right to it and a share in it.

The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) demonstrated clearly on that delicate occasion how he embodied steadfastness, fortitude, valour, total dependence on God, and sacrifice. He is a unique model. A believer in God and the Hereafter will always keep this model before him and try to conform to it.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَ الْيَوْمَ  
الْآخِرَ وَ ذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ۖ

*"Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah, an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and Final Day, and who remembers Allah much."*

(Qur'an 33:21)

True Muslims were neither afraid nor did they lose heart on seeing the huge army of the disbelievers invading Madinah. Instead, their faith increased as they looked upon the invasion as an unavoidable stage that Truth had to pass through on the way to victory. The time was ripe for the fulfilment of the promises made by Allah and His Messenger, and for the fulfilment of the prophecy that the Byzantine and Persian empires would collapse and Islam would fill the vacuum of power.

وَلَمَّا رَأَى الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْآخْزَابَ قَالُوا هَذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَصَدَقَ  
اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ ۚ وَمَا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّا إِيمَانًا وَتَسْلِيمًا ۖ

*"When the Believers saw the confederate forces, they said, 'This is what Allah and His Messenger had promised us, and Allah and His Messenger told us what was true.' And it only added to their faith and their zeal in obedience."*

*(Qur'an 33:22)*

Many laid down their lives in faith and submission to God, and many were willing to court martyrdom. Some fulfilled the covenant made with God, some were eagerly waiting for a chance to prove their sincerity in keeping the covenant.

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ  
وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَنْتَظِرُ ۚ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٣﴾

*"Among the Believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah: of them some have died and some (still) wait: but they have never changed (their determination) in the least."*

*(Qur'an 33:23)*

In different contexts, the Qur'an has laid bare the change that faith produces in character and how noble virtues are fostered and how hypocrisy generates selfishness, profiteering, and treachery. During the Battle of the Trench, the Believers displayed their strength of character and the hypocrites betrayed their low and mean character. (To know the circumstances leading to the Battle of the Ditch Cahzab), one should turn to the history of Islam.)

[The call to faith is also an encounter, an attempt to replace falsehood with truth. To succeed in this

encounter a strong belief is needed. In the process very delicate situations arise and have arisen when hypocrisy and weak faith do not keep one's feet firm and steady.]

**(vii) The soul of faith is relationship with  
and love for God**

What is the soul of religion? It is profound love for Allah; it is a deep attachment to Him. There is this phenomenon - men holding perverted ideas dear, idol-worshippers showering their love upon the idols, masses going crazy in their hero-worship of the leaders of the party. Sometimes one gets an impression that the objects of their devotion are manifestations of God and are being treated as such. But this is all a make-believe, an evanescent phenomenon. When a man is seized of the fact that the object of his love is a broken reed, and will leave him in the lurch in times of crisis, and the consequence of this love would land him in a soup, this love no longer lasts. *When the boat of the worshippers of many gods is caught in a whirlpool, they forget the self-forged deities and fervently call upon One God for prompt help. (Qur'an 10:22)* In the Hereafter the false and strange gods would be cut to size and there would be mutual recrimination between them and their devotees.

The way Allah's devotees love Him has a quality all its own. The quantum of their love for Allah is a thousandfold greater than the love given to the false

gods. The ties of their love for Allah do not snap in happiness and sorrow, during halcyon days and stormy days, whether they are prosperous or passing through hard times, in the pink of health or under a shadow of disease. Whatever be their lot, it is God-given and so they are embodiments of patience and gratitude, and find inner peace by clinging to Allah. They have a positive attitude towards Him and do not seek help from others. This dependence on and trust in Allah only sincere devotees secure.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ  
آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

*"Yet there are men who take (for worship) others besides Allah, as equal (with Allah): they love them as they should love Allah. But those of faith are overflowing in their love for Allah." (Qur'an 2:165)*

It is a great grace of Allah upon men of faith that He fills their hearts with love for Him and hatred towards disbelief and sin. It is a sign that they have been blessed with guidance and saved from straying and deviation.

... وَلَئِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ  
وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّشِدُونَ

*"Allah has endeared the faith to you, and He made it beautiful in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you unbelief, wrongdoing, and rebellion: such indeed are those who walk in righteousness." (Qur'an 49:7)*

When the heart is adorned with love of God, then disbelief, misconduct, and rebellion are dismissed with contempt. After all the human heart cannot accommodate love for God and love for unbelief and sin at one and the same time.

### **(viii) Devotees of Allah love the Believers**

If you love Allah, you will love all those who believe in and are loyal to Allah too and experience intellectual and emotional integration with them. Service to them will bring a sense of relief. Treating them with affection will bring peace. Sympathy towards them in their hardship will come naturally. You will respect them and not show contempt to them. You will be humble towards them and not strut before them. It is this temperament that strengthens communal concord and protects it from disintegration.

### **(ix) Devotees of Allah do not kneel before His rebels**

Another dimension of the character of Allah's devotee will be the stubborn tenacity that he displays vis-a-vis the rebels of Allah and opponents of Islam. They will catch a Tartar in him; they will feel the power of steel in him. He may be made a butt of ridicule and subjected to sarcasm for his conversion to Islam but this will not arrest his advance or stifle his voice raised to uphold the Truth. Vide the following from the Qur'an.



يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ  
وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ  
اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةً لَائِمَةً ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ  
وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

*"O ye who believe! If any from among you turn back from his Faith, soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him, - lowly with Believers, mighty against the Rejecters, fighting in the way of Allah, and never afraid of the reproaches of such as find fault. That is the Grace of Allah, which He will bestow on whom He pleaseth. And Allah encompasseth all, and He knoweth all things."*

(Qur'an 5:54)

(The phrase 'Mighty against the Rejecters' does not mean that a Muslim is ever in a state of war with non-Muslims and is hostile and aggressive towards them at every step. This phrase has two aspects. One, devotees of Allah remain firm in their allegiance to Faith and non-Muslims will not be able to weaken that allegiance and they will realize that Muslims tower like mountains of firm determination. Two, in a state of war against forces of falsehood, they will demonstrate their courage and not pusillanimity. The phrase 'Mighty against the Rejecters' has been used in a particular context and contiguous to this phrase is the reference to Jihad. In normal circumstances, Islam enjoins upon Muslims affectionate and gentle treatment towards the enemies,

and patience and forgiveness in reply to their undesirable and even atrocious behaviour towards them. For further details, refer to my book 'Conduct towards Non-Muslims and their Rights'.)

**(x) Any Attachment subject to the Attachment to God is valid**

Man is attached to persons, resources, and an unknown variety of things and holds them dear. He naturally loves parents, wife and children, friends and relatives. This love is valid and desirable within its limits. The test of faith is that every kind of love should be subordinated to the love for Allah and the Prophet. In case of conflict between one kind of love and another, it is the love for Allah and the Prophet that should bear the palm.

**(xi) Allah loves His loyal devotees**

When a slave loves God, is engaged in remembering Him, spends his days and nights in worshipping and serving Him, bears hardships in His path, and when his soul is filled with the bliss of submission to Him, then Allah casts His grace upon him and covers him with His love. What a great compensation it is that a weak slave through his humble attempt is deemed worthy of Allah's love! Allah showers His blessings upon him. This fact is noted in several places in the Qur'an. Here some allusions

are given.

1. Allah loves those who fulfil their covenant with Him and who live in constant fear of Him. It is a covenant of servility, of submission to His orders, of tenacious loyalty to faith, of spreading its message to others, and of making it supreme. To maintain this covenant is per se piety and fear of God and it ensures man's victory. The preceding nations did not fulfil the covenant and met with failure. Instruction is given to avoid this behaviour.

بَلْ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ وَاتَّقَىٰ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

*"Those that keep their plighted faith and act aright, verily Allah loves those who act aright." (Qur'an 3:76)*

2. Allah loves those who remember Him fervently, tearfully, and in fear and hope both in public and in private and who keep away from injustice, torture, terrorism and anarchy.

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ۚ إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

*"Call on your Lord with humility and in private. For Allah loveth not those who trespass beyond bounds. Do no mischief on the earth, after it hath been set in order, but call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts): for the mercy of Allah is (always) near to those who do good."* (Qur'an 7:55, 56)

3. When a slave endeavours to make Islam triumph and puts at stake his life and money, Allah loves him.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًا كَأَنَّهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ مَرْصُومٌ ۝

*"Truly Allah loves those who fight in His cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure."*  
(Qur'an 61:4)

These verses discuss different aspects of Islam. One can find out what the demands of the love for Allah are and when he earns the right to get Allah's love, what kind of character a Muslim should have and what wrong deeds distance him from Allah's mercy and love.

**(xii) Love for Allah's Messenger** (blessings and peace be upon him)

If someone loves Allah, then the need to obey Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) must be strongly felt at heart. He must carry out the Prophet's instructions with all his heart and mind and the obedience to every order of his must be treated as compulsory. We attach so much importance to the obedience of the Prophet because it is like obeying God and his order is just like God's order. The Qur'an clearly states:

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ ۚ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ۖ

*"He who obeys the Messenger obeys Allah: but if any turn away, We have not sent thee to watch over them."*  
(Qur'an 4:80)

The only way to prove your love for God is to carry out the Messenger's orders implicitly. Without this in the

practical world, no meaning can be attached to the mere oral declaration of love for God. It is stated,

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝ قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ ۚ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

*"Say: If you do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: for Allah is oft-forgiving and most merciful. Say: Obey Allah and His Messenger: But if they turn back. Allah loveth not those who reject Faith."* (Qur'an 3: 31, 32)

In the first of these two verses, obedience to the Prophet was demanded as a proof of your love for God; in the second verse, the order to obey Allah and the Prophet is given in one breath. This is just to express the fact that there is no distinction whatever between obedience to Allah and obedience to the Prophet.

You obey him whom you love. If this love is all-pervasive, you become an embodiment of total surrender. It is unnatural if you go against the wishes of and ignore the instructions of your beloved. The unnatural state betrays the fact that a mere declaration of love is not genuine love.

There can be no true belief without love for Allah's Messenger and this love should not be merely oral and formal but should be backed by the heart and should reach its peak. This should not be subject to any

relationship but should transcend it. A tradition narrated by Hazrath Anas (Allah be pleased with him) throws light on this. The Prophet said,

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَالِدِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ-

*"None of you can become a (true) Momin until you love me more than you love your parent(s) and children, and all other human beings."*

*(Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Iman, Babo Hubir Rasool minal Iman, Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Iman, Babo wajoob Muhabate Rasoolulllah....)*

Hazrath Abdullah bin Amr quotes a statement of the Prophet,

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونَ هَوَاهُ تَبَعًا لِمَا جُئْتُ بِهِ-

*"None of you can become a (true) Momin until your personal wishes are brought in line with the religion that I have brought." (Mishkath quoted from Sharh Sunnah)*

### **(xiii) The Taste of Belief**

Man pounces upon and pursues many material objects because he is fascinated by them. Even spiritual conditions contain an attraction of their own. One gets a taste of it when love for Allah and the Prophet becomes all-pervasive and his personal likes and dislikes become the same as those of Allah and the Prophet.

The Tradition of Hazrat Anas makes it clear that the bliss and the taste of faith can be experienced only when

the love for Allah and His Messenger dominates every other love. The human relationships should be regulated on its basis; sin should be as painful and unpleasant as being burnt to ashes is. This Tradition reads as follows:

ثَلَاثٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ وَجَدَ بِهِنَّ حَلَاوَةَ الْإِيمَانِ مَنْ كَانَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا سِوَاهُمَا وَمَنْ أَحَبَّ عَبْدًا لَا يُحِبُّهُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَعُودَ فِي الْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ أَنْ أَنْقَذَهُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ كَمَا يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يُتْلَى فِي النَّارِ

*"The sweetness of faith is felt by a person who possesses three qualities. He loves Allah and His Messenger more than he loves other things. If he loves anyone, it should be because of his love for Allah. After Allah's guidance, apostasy should be as abhorrent to him as being thrown in fire."*

*(Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Iman, babo Halawatil Iman, Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Iman, babo Bayan Khasail min atsaf behin wajad halawatal Iman)*

In another Tradition, it is stated faith reaches perfection when friendship, enmity, praise and blame all are regulated by love for Allah. Abu Umama (Allah be pleased with him) says that the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) said,

مَنْ أَحَبَّ لِلَّهِ وَبَغَضَ لِلَّهِ وَعَطَى لِلَّهِ وَمَنَعَ لِلَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَكْمَلَ الْإِيمَانَ.

*"One who loves for the sake of Allah, hates for the sake of Allah, gives for the sake of Allah, refuses for the sake of Allah has made his faith highly perfect."*

*(Sunan Abi Dawood Kitabus Sunnah)*

This Tradition points out the peak of faith. Man's relationships should be subject to love for Allah and not for any material or worldly gain. There can be love for any person only for Allah's approval and pleasure. Any alienation from a person should not be due to any personal enmity, family feud, national or group prejudice or any feeling of a similar nature. It should be due to his being sinful and rebellious against God. This alienation in reality will not be from his person but from his perverted behaviour. Relationship with him as a person will be maintained. Cooperation and sympathy will be extended to him when he is in trouble. Attempt to remedy the situation will be made. If he accepts the remediation and returns to the state of obedience and loyalty, relationship on the basis of faith will be established and this relationship will be far stronger than any other relationship.

Another sign of the perfection of faith is that money should be spent in accordance with God's will and it should not be spent where it is not approved by God. It should be spent to meet the legitimate needs of God's slaves and to serve Islam and to make it triumph. Money should not be wasted on acts of sin and disobedience. You should not cooperate with others in such wastage.

Promise, pledge, oath of obedience - all these should be given only to secure Allah's pleasure. There should be no cooperation with a tyrant and for evil acts. This is



another meaning of giving in the way of Allah.

Man should remain satisfied after believing in the existence of God and this is necessary to enjoy the sweetness of faith. His soul should experience infinite bliss on realizing that Allah is his Lord. He remains focused on Him. No other object should hold that attraction for him as God does. Islam should be the beloved religion of his and he should look upon Allah's Messenger as his true and genuine leader. Hazrat Abbas, son of Abdul Muttalib, narrates that the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) said,

ذاق طعم الايمان من رضى بالله ربا وبالاسلام دينا و بمحمد  
رسولا

*"That person has tasted the taste of faith when he is supremely satisfied with Allah as his Lord, with Islam as his religion, with Muhammad as (Allah's) Messenger."*  
(Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Iman)

This exalted state of supreme satisfaction can be accessed when belief in Allah, the Prophet, and Islam has been confirmed through the exercise of mental faculties and has been internalized fully consciously.

#### **(xiv) The Role of Relationship with Allah in the Call to Faith**

One learns from the study of the Qur'an and Hadith that genuine service to the religion of Allah is and can be rendered only by that person who has deep and abiding

relationship with Allah, who knows how to live and die, to join and cut, to give and take for His sake, who loves Him most and who fears Him most, who feels happy even after bearing hardships in His way, whose tongue does not compromise its purity by uttering complaints against God even in the most trying of circumstances, whose heart is so awe-struck by Him as to exclude fear of anybody else, who feels that he has not done enough for God even after sacrificing his energies and talents, comfort and rest, money and property, luxury and respite, interests and hobbies, who after exerting himself to the utmost is worried over his deficient service to God, who treats harm to his religion as harm to himself, and feels happier over the progress of his religion than over his own progress, who defends his religion by putting up with all losses. It is not within the powers of a person to render service to Islam without having a strong relationship with Allah. Even if he initiates some service under any short-lived enthusiasm, it will not be possible for him to keep it up, to bear the difficulties that keep cropping up on the way, and to make sacrifices.

Belief demands true loyalty, continual sacrifice, bold endeavour, sincere devotion, total dedication to God, sale of the self in the bargain for Allah's pleasure. The man who is not prepared to sell himself cannot possess the belief that brings in its wake a shower of divine mercies and divine rewards.



### III B. Belief in the Hereafter

#### (i) Significance of this Belief

Belief in the Hereafter is a fundamental belief in Islam. Unless a person believes in it, he cannot come into the fold of Islam. Without this belief, a person's Islam is unreliable. The Qur'an is a source of guidance for God-fearing and pious Muslims and one of the identifying marks of such Muslims, mentioned in the very beginning of the Book itself, is as follows:-

وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

*"And (in their hearts they) have the assurance of the Hereafter."*

(Qur'an 2:4)

In another place it is stated that this Book gives guidance to people of magnanimity, a prominent virtue of theirs is as follows:

وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

*"And (they) have sure faith in the Hereafter."*

(Qur'an 31:4)

#### (ii) The Hereafter is ineluctable

It is our belief that every Qur'anic statement is true and beyond a shadow of doubt and the Qur'an says that

the Hereafter is sure to arrive as it is the decree of the Sovereign of the heavens and the earth and no power can tamper with this decree. See the categorical and magnificent tone in the following:

وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ أَحَقُّ هُوَ قُلْ إِنْ وَ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ ۖ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ

*"They seek to be informed by thee: 'Is that true? Say: 'Aye! by my Lord! it is the very truth! and ye cannot frustrate it!'"* (Qur'an 10:53)

This fact is reiterated emphatically in several places in the Qur'an.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَأْتِينَا السَّاعَةُ قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَ رَبِّي لَتَأْتِيَنَّكُمُ الْعَذَابُ لَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا أَصْغَرُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرُ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ لِّيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَ رِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ۝ وَالَّذِينَ سَعَوْا فِي آيَاتِنَا مُعْجِزِينَ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِنْ تَرْجُو الْيَمِّ ۝

*"The unbelievers say, 'Never to us will come the Hour'. Say, 'Nay! But most surely by my Lord, it will come upon you;- by Him who knows the unseen, - from whom is not hidden the least little atom in the heavens or on earth: nor is there anything less than that, or greater, but is in the Record perspicuous: that He may reward those who believe and work deeds of righteousness: for such is forgiveness and a sustenance most generous. But those who strive against our signs, to frustrate them, - for such will be a chastisement of painful wrath.'" (Qur'an 34:3-5)*

The same theme is expressed as follows:

رَعَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ لَنْ يُبْعَثُوا قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤُنَّ بِمَا  
عَمِلْتُمْ ۖ وَذَلِكُمْ عَلَىٰ اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ①

*"The unbelievers think that they will not be raised up (for judgment). Say: "Yea, by my Lord, ye shall surely be raised up: then shall ye be told (the truth) of all that ye did. And that is easy for Allah." (Qur'an 64:7)*

The refutation of those who emphatically deny the possibility of the Hereafter is as follows:

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ آيَاتِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَمُوتُ ۖ بَلَىٰ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا  
وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ② لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي يُخْتَلَفُونَ فِيهِ ۖ وَلِيَعْلَمَ  
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَذِبِينَ ③ إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ نَقُولَ  
لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ④

*"They swear their strongest oath by Allah, that Allah will not raise up those who die: Nay, but it is a promise (binding) on Him in truth: but most among mankind know it not. (They must be raised up), in order that He may manifest to them the truth of that wherein they differ, and that the rejecters of Truth may realize that they were liars. For to anything which We have willed, We but say, 'Be', and it is." (Qur'an 16: 38-40)*

As a proof in favour of the possibility of the hereafter, the creation and existence of man and the rain-induced fertility of the soil are cited. Then this statement is made,

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ ۖ وَأَنَّهُ يُخَيِّمُ الْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ وَأَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ⑤ وَأَنَّ  
السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا ۖ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَنْ فِي الْقُبُورِ ⑥

*"This is so, because Allah is the Reality: it is He who gives life to the dead, and it is He who has power over all things. And verily the Hour will come: there can be no doubt about it, or about (the fact) that Allah will raise up all who are in the graves."* (Qur'an 22: 6,7)

In these verses there is the tone of conviction and authority which is a characteristic of all scriptures and it is prominent in the Qur'an. However, one should not be led to conclude that there is just an assertion that the Hereafter will arrive and that there is no proof to substantiate the assertion. The fact of the matter is that answer to the following questions is found in the excerpts - When will the Hour come? Why will it come? Is there any possibility? In what form will it come? In the following paragraphs an explanation will be attempted by alluding to other Qur'anic verses.

### **(iii) When the Hour arrives**

When the Hour arrives, this world with all its paraphernalia will collapse. The earth and the sky will be dislocated. A new world order will come into existence. It is known as Yowm-ul-Qiyamah. The Day when the dead will be resurrected and will appear before the Lord.

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ ۚ وَحُلِبَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً  
وَاحِدَةً ۚ فَيَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ۚ

*"Then, when one Blast last is sounded on the Trumpet, and the earth is moved and its mountains, and they are*

*crushed at one stroke, on that Day shall the (Great) Event come to pass."* (Qur'an 69: 13-15)

Here is another scene:

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ۚ لَيْسَ لِمَنْ يُوَفِّيهِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ۖ خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ ۚ إِذَا رُجَّتِ  
الْأَرْضُ رَجًا ۚ وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا ۚ فَكَانَتْ هَبَاءً مُنْبَثًّا ۚ

*"When the Event inevitable cometh to pass, then will no (soul) deny its coming. Many will it bring low; (many) will it exalt. When the earth shall be shaken to its depths, and the mountains shall be crumbled to atoms, becoming dust scattered abroad"* (Qur'an 56: 1-6)

At that time the earth and the sky will be reshaped. Planets, stars, the solar system will disintegrate. The human species will be resurrected. Everyone will hold his record of deeds. There will be Heaven full of beautiful things and hell containing blazing fire in front of all. Man would be witnessing the deeds he did in this world.

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ۚ وَ إِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ۚ وَ إِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ۚ وَ  
إِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ۚ وَ إِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ۚ وَ إِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ۚ  
وَ إِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ۚ وَ إِذَا الْبُوعَدُةُ صُولَتْ ۚ يَأْتِي دُنْيَ قُتِلَتْ ۚ وَ إِذَا  
الصُّحُفُ تُبْرِتْ ۚ وَ إِذَا السَّمَاءُ كُشِطَتْ ۚ وَ إِذَا الْجَهَنَّمَ سُورَتْ ۚ وَ إِذَا الْجَنَّةُ  
أُزْلِفَتْ ۚ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْصَرَتْ ۚ

*"When the sun (with its spacious light) is folded up, when the stars fall, losing their lustre, when the mountains vanish (like a mirage), when the she-camels, ten months with young, are left untended, when the wild beasts are herded together (in human habitations), when the oceans boil over with a swell,*



*when the souls are sorted out, (being joined, like with like), when the female (infant) buried alive, is questioned, for what crime she was killed, when the scrolls are laid open, when the sky is unveiled, when the blazing fire is kindled to fierce heat, and when the garden is brought near, (then) shall each soul know what it has put forward.* (Qur'an 81: 1-14)

One more scene, how frightening and awe-inspiring!

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ  
مَا لَهَا يَوْمَئِذٍ تُخْبِرُ أَخْبَارَهَا يَا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ انظُرُوا أَصَابَكُمْ لَكُمْ  
الَّذِينَ أَشْتَاتَا لِيُبَرِّدُوا أَصَابَهُمْ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ  
وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

*"When the earth is shaken to her (utmost) convulsion, and the earth throws up her burdens (from within), and man cries (distressed): 'What is the matter with her?', - On that Day will she declare her tidings: for that thy Lord will have given her inspiration. On that Day will men proceed in groups sorted out, to be shown the deeds that they (had done). Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it! And anyone who had done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it!"* (Qur'an 99: 1-8)

#### **(iv) What necessitates the Hereafter?**

The Hereafter is needed to render seminal justice with regard to the good and the evil and to enable everyone to get the fate he deserves. The good and the righteous slaves of God should be rewarded for their obedience and loyalty and for their avoidance of sin.

Those who disobeyed God and rebelled against Him and wallowed in sin should see with their own eyes His wrath and painful chastisement.

إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا إِنَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ لِيَجْزِيَ  
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِنْ  
حَمِيمٍ وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

*"To Him will be your return - of all of you. The promise of Allah is true and sure. It is He who beginneth the process of creation, and repeateth it, that He may reward with justice those who believe and work righteousness; but those who reject Him will have draughts of boiling fluids, and a chastisement grievous because they did reject Him." (Qur'an 10:4)*

#### (v) Is the Hereafter Possible?

Will this world end? Will another world replace this? Will it be possible for man to appear in the court of Allah to explain his conduct in this world and to receive the final verdict of being sent to heaven or hell?

A simple answer will be that Allah, being the Creator of cosmos, exercises unrestricted powers over everything. It is not beyond His powers to create a new world, to reward the righteous, and to punish the recalcitrant. Nothing is impossible for Him. Note the following:

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا بِمَا عَمِلُوا  
وَلِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا بِالْقِسْطِ ﴿١١﴾

*"Yea, to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on*

*earth; so that He rewards those who do evil, according to their deeds, and He rewards those who do good, with what is best."* (Qur'an 53:31)

The idea that the Hereafter is impossible occurs to a person who thinks that God is no God, that He is not the Owner of the heavens and the earth, and that His powers are inferior and limited. He does not envisage His omnipotence, and so he needs an attitudinal correction.

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ ۖ سُبْحَنَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

*"No just estimate have they made of Allah, such as is due to Him: on the Day of Judgment the whole of the earth will be but His handful, and heavens will be rolled up in His right hand: Glory to Him! High is He above the partners they attribute to Him!"*

(Qur'an 39:67)

Whatever and whenever He wants to create, He can create as His powers are infinite and nothing is outside the pale of His authority.

أَوَلَيْسَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَى أَنْ يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ ۚ بَلَىٰ وَهُوَ الْخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٤٠﴾ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤١﴾ فَسُبْحَانَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

*"Is not He who created the heavens and earth able to create the like thereof?" - Yea, indeed! For He is the Creator supreme, of skill and knowledge (infinite)! Verily, when He intends a thing, His command is, "Be", and it is! So glory to Him in whose hands is the*

*dominion of all things: and to Him will ye be all brought back."*  
(Qur'an 36:81-83)

## (vi) The Hereafter appeals to the Mind

It is but rational to think that God, the Owner of this world, cannot treat the recalcitrant and the righteous alike. Death is the leveller of the good and the bad. If death is the end for both and their fate is the same, and there is no reward for the good and the righteous and no punishment for the evil-doer and the disobedient, then that would be a violation of His justice and wisdom. The Hereafter will make it clear that the fate of the two groups of people is in reality not the same. In this way, belief in the Hereafter satisfies the mind and the rejection of this belief is irrational.

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَلَا  
الْمُسِيءَ ۗ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ۝ إِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَأْتِيَةٌ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا وَلَكِنَّ  
أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

*"Not equal are the blind and those who (clearly) see: nor are (equal) those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and those who do evil. Little do ye learn by admonition! The Hour will certainly come: therein is no doubt: yet most men believe not."* (Qur'an 40: 58,59)

If the mind - satisfying belief is ignored, only amazement is left.

مَثَلُ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ كَالْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرِ ۖ وَالسَّبْعِ ۗ هَلْ يَسْتَوِينَ مَثَلًا

أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

*"These two kinds (men) may be compared to the blind and deaf, and those who can see and hear well. Are they equal when compared? Will ye not then take heed?"*

(Qur'an 11:24)

This self-evident truth is extolled on several occasions. In one place, it is stated as follows:

أَمَنَ كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَن كَانَ فَاسِقًا ۚ لَا يَسْتَوُونَ ۚ أَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ الْمُبَالَى ۖ نُزُلًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۚ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فَسَقُوا فَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ ۖ كُلَّمَا أَرَادُوا أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ النَّارِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ ۚ

*"Is then the man who believes no better than the man who is rebellious and wicked? Not equal are they. For those who believe and do righteous deeds, are gardens as hospitable homes for their good deeds. As to those who are rebellious and wicked, their abode will be the fire: every time they wish to get away therefrom, they will be forced therein, and it will be said to them: Taste ye the chastisement of the fire, the which ye were wont to reject as false."*

(Qur'an 32: 18-20)

One more explanation may be noted. If the good and the bad, the righteous and the recalcitrant, the kind and the wicked have only one fate, then it implies that this universe has no owner and ruler, no one to reprimand and to punish, that this universe has no set purpose, and that its end would be as coincidental as its emergence. Every particle of this universe bears witness to the fact that the

universe was brought into existence not for sport or fun and frolic but it is a creation of the One who is extremely wise and All-knowing and All-seeing. There is a noble purpose behind this creation and this purpose is its operating principle which demands that there should be a balance of justice in which every deed will be weighed. No rights should be denied, no injustice should be done. Everyone should get the fruits of justice.

أَمْرَ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ نَجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَوَاءً مَحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ۚ وَخَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَلِيُجْزِيَ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

*"What! do those who do evil deeds think that We shall make them as equal with those who believe and do righteous deeds, - that equal will be their life and their death? Ill is the judgment that they make.*

*Allah created the heavens and the earth for just ends, and in order that each soul may find the recompense of what it has earned, and none of them shall be wronged."*

(Qur'an 45: 21,22)

### **(vii) What does the Hereafter hold in store?**

In the Hereafter, the entire human species will stand before the Lord. No one will find a hiding place. Each human life will be laid bare. Everyone will hold the record of his deeds in his hand. Eternal recompense / punishment in the form of heaven and of hell will be

decreed in keeping with that record. The Qur'an records the condition of man at that time.

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُحْضَرًا ۖ وَ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ  
لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا ۚ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ  
بِالْعِبَادِ

*"On the Day when every soul will be confronted with all the good that it has done, and all the evil it has done, it will wish there were a great distance between it and its evil. But Allah cautions you (to fear) Him and Allah is full of kindness to those that serve Him."*

(Qur'an 3: 30)

On that Day, all ties which man thinks are highly reliable and in whose love he forgets God will break one by one. Mother, father, wife, children, closest friends and relatives will be of no avail. Everyone will be obliged to fend for himself. Everyone will be absorbed in self-defence. On that Day the disobedient will look at the punishment and to avoid it they will be prepared to give the world and its riches in ransom to save themselves. Such a possibility will not be there.

يَوْمَ تَكُونُ السَّمَاءُ كَالذَّهَبِ ۖ وَ تَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ ۖ وَلَا يَسْأَلُ حَرِيمٌ  
حَرِيمًا ۚ يُبْصَرُونَ هُمْ ۚ يَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمُ لَوْ يَفْقَدُونِ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِهِمْ يَسْتَأْذِنُونَ  
وَصَاحِبِهِ وَ أَخِيهِ ۚ وَ قَسِيْلَتِ الْاُتَى تُؤْوِيهِ ۚ وَ مَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ  
يُنْجِيهِ ۚ كَلَّا ۚ اِنَّهَا لَطَفٌ ۚ نَزَاعَةٌ لِّلشَّوْىِ

*"The Day that the sky will be like molten brass, and the mountains will be like wool, and no friend will ask after a friend, though they will be put in sight of each*





### (viii) The Hereafter is not for lampooning

How unwise are those people who do not believe in the Hereafter, who reject such a belief and who treat such a belief as a joke! They are indifferent to and not worried about their fate; which is close on their heels. When the Hereafter arrives and man sees with his open eyes his own conduct in life and its aftermath, then he will be scared out of his wits and he will see no escape route. The Qur'an advises us that we should not lampoon that Day but to be sober and focused upon and worried about what would happen to us on that Day.

يَسْأَلُ أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ فَإِذَا يَبْقَى الْبَصَرُ ۚ وَخَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ ۚ وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ ۚ يَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيْنَ الْمَفْزِعُ ۚ كَلَّا لَا تَدْرِكُهُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُسْتَقَرُّ ۚ يُنْفَخُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَآخَرَ ۚ

*"He questions: 'When is the Day of Resurrection?' At length, when the sight is dazed, and the moon is buried in darkness, and the sun and the moon are joined together, that Day will man say: where is the refuge?" By no means! No place of safety! Before the Lord (alone), the Day will be the place of rest. That Day will man be told (all) that he put forward, and all that he put back."*

(Qur'an 75: 6-13)

### (ix) Be focused on the Hereafter

The greatest event of this cosmos is going to be the encounter with God's chastisement or His reward. There is nothing more frightening than God's punishment and one should always think of avoiding it. There is nothing

more blessed than Allah's reward and man should always be desirous of it. The Qur'an repeatedly reminds man of this.

رَفِيعُ الدَّرَجَاتِ ذُو الْعَرْشِ ۚ يُلْقِي الرُّوحَ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ  
لِيُنْذِرَ يَوْمَ التَّلَاقِ ۚ يَوْمَ هُمْ بَرْزُودٌ ۚ لَا يَخْفَى عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْهُمْ شَيْءٌ ۚ لَسْنَا  
السُّلُوكِ الْيَوْمَ ۚ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ ۝ أَلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ ۚ  
لَا ظُلْمَ الْيَوْمَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ۝ وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْآزِفَةِ إِذِ الْقُلُوبُ  
لَدَى الْحَاجِرِ كَظُوفِينَ ۚ مَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ حَیْمٍ وَلَا لَشَفِيعٍ يُطَاعُونَ

*"Exalted is He in His attributes. (He is) the Lord of the Throne, by His command doth He send the spirit (of inspiration) to any of His servants He pleases, that it may warn (men) of the Day of mutual meeting, The Day whereon they will (all) come forth: not a single thing concerning them is hidden from Allah. Whose will be the dominion of the Day? That of Allah, the One, the Overpowering! That Day will every soul be requited for what it earned; no injustice will there be that Day, for Allah is swift in taking account. Warn them of that Day that is (ever) drawing near, when the hearts will (come) right up to the throats to choke (them). No intimate friend nor intercessors will the wrong-doers have, who could be listened to."*

(Qur'an 40: 15-18)

The warning about this fate is repeated. Two extracts are given as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ وَاحْشَوْا يَوْمًا لَا يَجْرِي وَالِدٌ عَنْ وَلَدِهِ وَلَا  
مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَانِبُ عَنْ وَالِدِهِ شَيْئًا ۚ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ

الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَا يَعْزَّزْكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْعَزَّوُورُ ۝

*"O mankind! Do your duty to your Lord and fear (the coming of a Day when no father can avail aught for his son, nor a son avail aught for his father. Verily, the promise of Allah is true: let not then this present life deceive you, nor let the chief deceiver deceive you about Allah."*  
(Qur'an 31:33)

ذٰلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ ۚ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ اِلٰى رَبِّهِ مَآبًا ۚ اِنَّا اَنْذَرْنٰكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا ۙ يَوْمَ يَنْظُرُ الْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ يَلَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ تُرَابًا

*"That is the true Day: Therefore whoso will, let him take a (straight) return to his Lord. Verily, We have warned you of a chastisement near, -the Day when man will see (the deeds) which his hands have sent forth, and the unbeliever will say, 'Woe, unto me! Would that I were (mere) dust!'"*  
(Qur'an 78: 39, 40)

#### (x) The Evanescent World and the Eternal Hereafter

This world is evanescent. Nothing bears the stamp of permanence here. Anything that comes into existence lives on borrowed time and one day it is wrapped up in extinction. Here youth and life, pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow - everything is temporary. But there is a world which is permanent, infinite, endless. In that world man will live for ever, where life will be unfamiliar with death, where luxuries and difficulties will last for ever, where what is gained will never be lost, and what is denied will never be gained. The Hereafter is a place where peace, rest, comforts, luxuries will be for ever, and

where pain, sorrow, grief, agony, torture will be for ever. There will be Heaven or Hell in the Hereafter. Heaven is the home for all blessed things and Hell will be the centre for chastisement and punishment. The righteous and loyal servants of Allah will gain Heaven; the rebels and the disobedient of God will be thrown in Hell. There is a fond desire in the human heart for Heaven, for a world free from sorrow, pain, grief and agony, and where all good things should never decay, and where pleasure and luxury are permanent. In spite of this desire, he loses himself in the earthly attractions and forgets the Hereafter. He lives oblivious of the Hereafter, of accountability, of Heaven and Hell. If you draw his attention to the Hereafter, and give proofs in favour of its possibility, his denial does not change into belief; his uncertainty, into conviction.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَالسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُمْ مَا نَدْرِي مَا السَّاعَةُ ۚ إِنَّ نَحْنُ إِلَّا ظَنَّا ۚ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُتَّبِعِينَ ۝

*"And when it was said that the promise of Allah was true, and that the Hour - there was no doubt about its (coming), ye used to say, 'We know not what is the Hour; we only think it a conjecture, and we have no firm assurance.'"*

(Qur'an 45:32)

Disregarding the Hereafter, they live complacently wallowing in sin under the impression that pseudo-pleasure is true pleasure and that this world is the be - all and the end-all, and that as there is no life after death,

one need not worry about it. Emperor Babar's poetical observation becomes the motto of their lives:

Babar ba aish kosh ke alam dobara neesth.

وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً ۖ وَلَئِنْ رُدِّدْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا مُتَقَبَّلاً ﴿٣٦﴾

*"Nor do I deem that the Hour (of Judgment) will (ever) come: even if I am brought back to my Lord. I shall surely find (there) something better in exchange."*

(Qur'an 18:36)

### (xi) When the world ensnares the mind

Man becomes oblivious of the Hereafter when the worldly attractions ensnare him. Ultimately he loses the Hereafter by enslaving himself to the world.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٤﴾  
الَّذِينَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ وَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ الْآخَسَرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

*"As to those who believe not in the Hereafter, We have made their deeds pleasing in their eyes: and so wander blindly. Such are they for whom a grievous chastisement is [waiting]; and in the Hereafter theirs will be the greatest loss."*

(Qur'an 27: 4,5)

When the world becomes the chief concern of men, they do not see beyond it. They live for it and die for it. They do not spare time for God and the Hereafter and for reconstructing their lives in relation to them.

A person oblivious of the Hereafter passes by the religion of God as though he has nothing to do with it.

He is indifferent to all the arguments advanced in favour of it. He rejects it and becomes a stumbling block on its way.

وَوَيْلٌ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ ۝ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَحِبُّونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى  
الْآخِرَةِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي صُلًى بَعِيدٍ ۝

*"But alas for the unbelievers for a terrible chastisement (their unfaith will bring them)! - Those who prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter, who hinder (men) from the path of Allah and seek to make it crooked: they are astray by a long distance."*

(Qur'an 14: 2, 3)

Order is given that those who are fascinated by this world and who make fun of religion may be left to themselves. It is repeatedly made plain that the Hour with all its devastating force will arrive and it will be a terrible time for people ensnared by the world. There will be no salvation for them.

وَذَرِ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لِبَآءٍ وَهُمْ لَا هُمْ وَلَا عَرْثُهُمْ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَذَكْرٌ بِهٖ أَنْ  
تُبْسَلَ نَفْسٌ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ ۖ لَيْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ ۚ وَإِنْ  
تَعْدِلْ كُلُّ عَدْلٍ لَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ أُبْسِلُوا بِمَا كَسَبُوا ۚ لَهُمْ  
شَرَابٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ۝

*"Leave alone those who take their religion to be mere play and amusement, and are deceived by the life of this world. But continue to admonish them with it. (Al-Qur'an) lest a soul is caught in its own ruin by its own action: it will find for itself no protector or intercessor except Allah: if it offered every ransom, (or*

*reparation), none will be accepted: such is (the end of) those who deliver themselves to ruin by their own acts: they will have for drink (only) boiling water, and for punishment one most grievous: for they persisted in rejecting Allah."*

*(Qur'an 6:70)*

## **(xii) Belief in Allah and Belief in the Hereafter: Their Symbiosis**

Belief in Allah and belief in the Hereafter are deeply interrelated so much so that there is a continual mobility in both directions. If there is no belief in the Hereafter, then the heart will not open to Allah and His religion and man will become arrogant and supercilious. The Qur'an's comment:

إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۖ فَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مُنْكَرَةٌ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ ۚ لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ ۝ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَآذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا آسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝ لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوْزَارَهُمْ كَامِلَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَ مِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ يُضِلُّونَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۚ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَزُرُونَ ۝

*"Your God is One God: as to those who believe not in the Hereafter, their hearts refuse to know, and they are arrogant. Undoubtedly Allah doth know what they conceal and what they reveal: verily He loveth not the arrogant. When it is said to them, 'What is it that your Lord has revealed?' they say, 'Tales of the ancients!' That they may bear, on the Day of Judgment, their own burdens in full, and also (something) of the burdens of those without knowledge, whom they misled. Alas! How grievous the burdens they will bear!" (Qur'an 16: 22-25)*

If there is no belief in the Hereafter, the mirror of the heart will neither shine nor reflect the light of the Qur'an which dispels the darkness of thought and action. Note the eloquence of the Qur'an in this regard.

وَ إِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ جَعَلْنَا بَيْنَكَ وَ بَيْنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ  
جَهَاً مُّسْتَوْرًا ۚ وَ جَعَلْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا  
وَ إِذَا ذُكِّرْتُمْ رَبَّكَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ وَحْدَهُ وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْبُرْجَانِ كُنُوا

*"When thou dost recite the Qur'an, we put, between thee and those who believe not in the Hereafter, a veil invisible: And We put coverings over their hearts (and minds) lest they should understand the Qur'an, and deafness into their ears: When thou dost mention thy Lord - and Him alone - in the Qur'an, they turn on their backs, fleeing (from the Truth)". (Qur'an 17: 45,46)*

The same theme in another place:

وَ إِنَّكَ لَتَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ۚ وَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ  
عَنِ الصِّرَاطِ لَكُنُوزٌ

*"But verily thou callest them to the Straight Way: and verily those who believe not in the Hereafter are deviating from that Way." (Qur'an 23: 73,74)*

When a person is not seized of the fact that he is a servant of Allah and He is answerable to Allah after his death, then he will not feel the need of God's religion. When he accepts the fact that the Hereafter is in the offing and it will come to bring rewards to the obedient people and punishment to the disobedient people, then he will not dare to reject God's religion, because without it,



he will always have the lurking fear of being within the range of God's punishment. The Qur'an makes this point clear.

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ...

*"Those who believe in the Hereafter believe in this (Book)".*  
(Qur'an 6: 92)

Belief in the Hereafter fosters obedience to Allah and enables one to eschew disobedience. At every step on the royal road of life, one is forced to remember that one is answerable to Allah one day. Pursuit of a wrong direction will bring no protection against Allah's punishment from any quarter. In the Hereafter, good people will enjoy themselves in Heaven and favours will be showered on them for their good conduct. In their conversation they would give credit to the fear of the Day and its punishment with which they lived in this world for the favours received in Heaven.

وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ۖ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِي أَهْلِنَا  
مُتَّفِقِينَ ۖ فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَدْنَا عَذَابَ السُّورِ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ  
نَدْعُوهُ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ ۝

*"They will advance to each other, engaging in mutual enquiry. They will say: Aforetime, we were not without fear for the sake of our people. But Allah has been good to us, and has delivered us from the chastisement of the scorching wind. Truly, we did call unto Him from of old; truly it is He, the Beneficent, the Merciful."*  
(Qur'an 52:25-28)

The conversation of the people of Heaven may be heard and their state of happiness may be noted:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ ۖ فَيَقُولُ هَؤُلَاءِ أَقْرَعُوا كِتَابِيهِ ۚ إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي  
مُلْكٌ حَسَابِيهِ ۚ فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ۖ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ قَدْ قُطِفَتْهَا دَانِيَةٌ ۖ  
كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْعَالِيَةِ ۝

*"Then he that will be given his record in his right hand will say: Ah here! Read ye my record. I did really think that my account would (one day) reach me! And he will be in a life of bliss, in a garden on high, the fruits whereof (will hang in bunches) low and near; Eat ye and drink ye, with full satisfaction; because of the (good) that ye sent before you, in the days that are gone."*

(Qur'an 69: 19-24)

### (xiii) The Impact of the Belief in the Hereafter on Life

While describing the radiant features of the character of the righteous people, one feature that the Qur'an emphasizes is their fear of the Hereafter. The concept of accountability in the Hereafter pervades their being and they remain in constant dread of it. Consequently the religious and moral transformation, and the aesthetic blossoming of character that this concept brings about in their lives are prominently mentioned in the Qur'an.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُمْ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِمْ مُسْتَغْفِرُونَ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ  
يُؤْمِنُونَ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوْا وَ  
تُؤْتِيهِمْ وَجَلَةً أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ  
لَهَا سَبِقُونَ ۝

*"Verily those who live in awe for fear of their Lord:*

*those who believe in the signs of their Lord; those who join not (in worship) partners with their Lord; and those who dispense their charity with their hearts full of fear, because they will return to their Lord; - it is these who hasten in every good work, and these who are foremost in them."* (Qur'an 23: 57-61)

وَالَّذِينَ يُصَدِّقُونَ بَيِّنَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ قَرْنُ عَذَابٍ رَّبِّهِمْ  
مُتَّقُونَ ۚ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمْ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ ۝

*"And those who hold to the truth of the Day of Judgment and those who fear the punishment of their Lord, for their Lord's punishment is not a thing to feel secure from."* (Qur'an 70: 26-28)

...بِرَجَالٍ لَا تُلْهِيمُهُمْ تِجَارَةً وَلَا بَيْعًا عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَ إِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَ  
إِيْتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَ الْآبْصَارُ ۝

*"By men whom neither trade nor sale can divert from the remembrance of Allah, nor from regular prayer, nor from paying zakat their (only) fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be turned about."*

(Qur'an 24:37)

#### **(xiv) The world should not be the goal of life**

Islam does not promote monastic life. In fact it is against it. (Qur'an 57:27) At the same time it strictly cautions against making this world the goal of human life at the expense of the Hereafter. It proposes to turn this life into a source of victory in the world to come. One has to live here with this realization that everything in this world is subject to death and decay and the eternal

Hereafter cannot be abandoned in preference for this world. This abandonment will lead to a terrible loss.

وَمَا أُوْتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَّاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتُهَا وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ  
وَأَبْلَى ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

*"The (material) things which ye are given are but the conveniences of this life and the glitter thereof; but that which is with Allah is better and more enduring: will ye not then be wise?"*  
(Qur'an 28:60)

Interests of the Hereafter are being subordinated to the interests of this world only to court ruin. Alas! They don't realize it.

بَلْ تُؤْمِنُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْلَى ۖ

*"Nay (behold), ye prefer the life of this world; but the Hereafter is better and more enduring."*  
(Qur'an 87:16,17)

وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ ۚ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ  
الْحَيَوَانُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

*"What is the life of this world but amusement and play? But verily the Home of the Hereafter, - that is life indeed, if they but knew."*  
(Qur'an 29: 64)

### (xv) The Instability of Worldly Grandeur

Worldly grandeur is both evanescent and untrustworthy. Still man is fond of this declining beauty and runs after it and does not realize that the grass is green today and tomorrow it will be hay. Heat waves can wreak havoc upon the lush greenery and man will be left

with nothing but frustration. This idea of instability is beautifully captured in the following verse.

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَكِبَارٌ فِي  
الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَشَلٍّ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَأُهُ هُمْ يَهْتَمُّونَ فَتَرَاهُ  
مُضْغَةً هُمْ يُكُونُ حُطَامًا وَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَ  
رِضْوَانٌ ۚ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعٌ الْعُرُودِ ۝

*"Know ye (all), that the life of this world is but play and a pastime, adornment and mutual boasting and multiplying, (in rivalry) among yourselves, riches and children. Here is a similitude: How rain and the growth which it brings forth, delight (the hearts of) the tillers; soon it withers; thou wilt see it grow yellow; then it becomes dry and crumbles away. But in the Hereafter is a chastisement severe (for the devotees of wrong). And forgiveness from Allah and (His) good pleasure (for the devotees of Allah). And what is the life of this world, but goods and chattels of deception?"*  
(Qur'an 57:20)

Life in this world is compared to a play and a pastime because it is a pleasant distraction, keeping urgent matters unattended. Beauty and adornment is skin-deep and not a measure of greatness and superiority. It is like the costly apparel worn by a cancer patient or amoral person. The apparel is no substitute for health or morality. The world is like that apparel; securing the riches of the earth does not imply a measure of popularity and status at the bar of God and the public. After all, what is there in securing a berth in the upper classes enjoying

wealth, influence and authority? It comes when it comes, it goes when it goes.

It is the height of naivete to get seduced by and become excessively fond of the passing show of this world. Heaven in the Hereafter should be the objective man should aspire for, hasten towards, ask for, constantly think about because that is the Home of eternal peace. Its gifts are for ever; after its riches, sense of privation will disappear for ever. Note the following verse:

سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
أَعَدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝

*"Be ye foremost (in seeking) forgiveness from your Lord, and a garden (of bliss), the width whereof is as the width of heaven and earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His messengers: that is the grace of Allah, which He bestows on whom He pleases: and Allah is the Lord of grace abounding." (Qur'an 57:21)*

How unfortunate is that man who achieves success in the world by means of hard striving and labour but ruins his fate in the Hereafter in the process!

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا ۝ الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ  
الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ۝ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ  
رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِمْ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا تُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَزْنًا ۝ ذَٰلِكَ  
جَزَاءُ هُمُ جَهَنَّمَ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَتَوَلَّوْا الْبَيْتَ وَرُسُلَهُمْ هُزُوا ۝ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا ۝ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَبْغُونَ

عَنْهَا جُولًا ۝

*"Say: Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds? - Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought that they were acquiring good by their works? They are those who deny the signs of their Lord and the fact of their having to meet Him (in the Hereafter): vain will be their works, nor shall We, on the Day of Judgment, give them any weight. That is their reward, Hell; because they rejected faith, and took My signs and My messengers by way of jest. As to those who believe and work righteous deeds, they have, for their entertainment, the Gardens of Paradise, wherein they shall dwell (for aye): no change will they wish for from them."*

(Qur'an 18:103-108)

A big difference between a believer and a non-believer is that the former is Hereafter- oriented and the latter is earthbound. The law of God in this matter is that one who is desirous of this world gets it under the rules, regulations and pleasure of God, and the one who seeks the hereafter gets it by His grace. This law is explained thus:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاءُ لِمَنْ نُرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَاهَا مَذْمُومًا مَذْهُورًا ۝ وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا ۝ كَلَّا لَبُدُّ هَؤُلَاءُ وَ هَؤُلَاءُ مِنْ عَطَاءِ رَبِّكَ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَاءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُورًا ۝ أَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَلِلْآخِرَةِ الْكِبْرُ دَرَجَاتٍ ۚ وَالْكَبِيرُ تُغْنِيهَا ۝

*"If any do wish for the transitory things (of this life),*

*we readily grant them such things as We will, to such persons as We will: in the end have We provided hell for them: they will burn therein, disgraced and rejected. Those who do wish for the things of the Hereafter, and strive therefore with all due striving, and have faith, they are the ones whose striving will be thanked (by Allah). Of the bounties of thy Lord We bestow freely on all-these as well as those: the bounties of thy Lord are not closed (to anyone). See how We have bestowed more on some than on others; but verily the Hereafter is more in rank and gradation and more in excellence."* (Qur'an 17:18-21)

Another statement:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ نَصِيبٍ ۝

*"To any that desires the tilth of the Hereafter, we give increase in his tilth; and to any that desires the tilth of this world, We grant somewhat thereof, but he has no share or lot in the Hereafter."* (Qur'an 42:20)

Still another statement:

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كَتَبْنَا مُوَدَّلًا ۖ وَمَنْ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا ۖ وَمَنْ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا ۖ وَسَجِّدُوا الشُّكْرَ ۝

*"If any do desire a reward in this life, We shall give it to him: and if any do desire a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give it to him. And swiftly shall We reward those that (serve us with) gratitude."* (Qur'an 3:145)

In the light of this regulation, the world-seekers are



informed.

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوفِ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ ﴿٥﴾ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ ۖ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَ بَلُلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦﴾

*"Those who desire the life of the present and its glitter, -to them We shall pay (the price of) their deeds therein, - without diminution. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the fire; vain are the designs they frame therein, and of no effect are the deeds that they do!*

*(Qur'an 11: 15,16)*

### **(xvi) Victory in the Hereafter is Victory indeed**

The world suffices for those who do not believe in God and the Hereafter. The believers are focused on victory in the Hereafter. Their lives and their activities are directed towards its attainment through absolute obedience to Allah and His Prophet. The Qur'an describes that victory as real and great victory.

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

*"Those who obey Allah and His Messenger will be admitted to the gardens with rivers flowing beneath, to abide therein (for ever) and that will be the supreme achievement."*

*(Qur'an 4:13)*

It is stated that, through struggle and sacrifice, man has to demonstrate his belief in Allah and the Prophet before the bounties could be seen:

يَعْقُوبُكُمْ دُنُوبَكُمْ ۖ يُدْخِلُكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ مَسْكِنَ طَيِّبَةً

فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦١﴾

*"He will forgive you your sins, and admit you to gardens beneath which rivers flow, and to beautiful mansions in gardens of eternity: that is indeed the supreme triumph."*  
(Qur'an 61:12)

Man deserves Heaven in the Hereafter through belief and good deeds and it is the greatest victory.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٨٥﴾

*"For those who believe and do righteous deeds will be gardens beneath which rivers flow: that is the great triumph."*  
(Qur'an 85:11)

This will be the grace of God for the believers who do good deeds.

تَرَى الظَّالِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا وَهُمْ لَا يَهْتُمُّونَ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا  
الصَّالِحَاتِ فِي رَوْضَةٍ أَلْبَنَىٰ لَهُمْ ۖ مَا يَشَاءُونَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ  
الْقَصْدُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٤٢﴾

*"Thou wilt see the wrong-doers in fear on account of what they have earned, and (the burden of) that must (necessarily) fall on them. But those who believe and work righteous deeds will be in the Meadows of the Gardens: they shall have before their Lord, all that they wish for. That will indeed be the magnificent bounty (of Allah)."*  
(Qur'an 42:22)

Fortunate and enviable is the man to whose lot victory and Heaven fall in the Hereafter.

### (xvii) The Call to Islam and Focus on the Hereafter

The call to Islam cannot be the vocation of people oblivious of the Hereafter; it requires volunteers preferring the Hereafter to the present life and getting nervous over the concept of being presented before God and questioned over the issue of service to faith.

The call to Islam is not a child's play but a huge effort; a prolonged struggle at different fronts. It is God's order:

وَجَاهِدْهُمْ بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾

*"Strive against them with the utmost strenuousness,  
with the Qur'an*

*(Qur'an 25:52)*

It is easy to describe this Jihad in words but to participate in it is not easy. When you participate in it, innumerable people who dislike and have differences with the religion of God and are desirous of eliminating it will oppose you. This is a Jihad in which on occasions your most cherished bonds will have to be broken, family ties will have to be cut and you will have to part company with the people most dear to you. Such a huge struggle cannot be waged by a person unwilling to displease someone, to put up with the termination of a relationship, and to bear separation from a friend. Such a huge struggle can be initiated and sustained by a person who holds the religion of God dearer than any other thing, who is not willing to displease God in order to please

someone else, and who has firm faith in the Hereafter and has realized that, in that world, no relationship of this world will be of any use.

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي  
قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِنْهُ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا  
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ  
إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

*"Thou wilt not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even they were their fathers or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred. For such He has written faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself. And He will admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein (for ever). Allah will be well pleased with them, and they with Him. They are the party of Allah. Truly it is the party of Allah that will achieve success."*

(Qur'an 58:22)

The call of Islam involves the act of courting an ordeal. To expect comfort and rest after taking up this task is vain. Advancing along the way, the caller is tried in every possible way, like physical and mental torture, threats, loss of wealth and property, chains and prison. Sometimes he may be called upon to make the supreme sacrifice losing his life. This sacrifice can be made by a man who believes in the Hereafter, who prefers victory in

the next world to physical comforts in this world, who fears punishment of hell more than the hardships here. If a person does not believe in the Hereafter, he thinks of ways and means to escape from death. Whatever he wants, he wants in this world, there is no other possible world where he hopes to get something. That's why, the Qur'an says,

لَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أَنْ يُجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ۝ إِنَّمَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَارْتَابَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِي رَايِهِمْ يَتَرَدَّدُونَ ۝

*"Those who believe in Allah and the last Day ask thee for no exemption from fighting with their goods and persons. And Allah knoweth well those who do their duty. Only those ask thee for exemption who believe not in Allah and the Last Day, and whose hearts are in doubt, so that they are tossed in their doubts to and fro."*

(Qur'an 9: 44, 45)

The call to Islam is not easy. It is like making one's self a target for difficulties and hardships. In the process very critical situations may and do crop up. For uttering the name of Islam the tongue may be pulled out from its root. The way towards God may be more difficult than walking upon fire. The hand that is raised in defence of Islam may be chopped. Such scenes the world has witnessed. In spite of all this, you and I have resolved to invite the world to Islam and to struggle to make it supreme. We will be able to live up to our resolve only

when we seek the Hereafter and we are fully seized of the fact that the world will end and the Hereafter will survive.

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْقُذُ وَ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۖ وَ لَنَجْزِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا أَجْرَهُمْ  
بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

*"What is with you must vanish: What is with Allah will endure. And We will certainly bestow on those who patiently persevere, their reward according to the best of their actions."*  
(Qur'an 16:96)

On the one hand we have the Heaven, a life without sorrow, and with all that which the eyes have not seen, and the ears have not heard and which no man has imagined. On the other hand, there is a life of luxury in this world, unrestricted life-style, with possibilities of progress unencumbered by the distinction of right or wrong. Of these two we have to select one, as we can not have both at the same time. If a person enjoys this world, he will lose the next. If a man aspires for the Hereafter, he will harm his interests in this world. The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) said,

مَنْ أَحَبَّ دُنْيَاهُ أَضَرَّ بِآخِرَتِهِ وَمَنْ أَحَبَّ آخِرَتَهُ أَضَرَّ بِدُنْيَاهُ فَالْتَزِمُوا  
مَا يَبْقَى عَلَى مَا يَفْنَى

*"He who loves his world will cause harm to his Hereafter; and he who loves his Hereafter will cause harm to his world. So prefer the everlasting (Hereafter) to what is going to end (world)."*

(Mishkatul Masaabih, Kitabur Riqaq with reference to Musnade Ahmed, Baihaqi)

If we obey the order contained in this Tradition and are prepared to bear privation in this world for the sake of gain in the Hereafter, then only we can render service to our Faith.

Trial during the course of the missionary work comes not only through difficulties but also through comforts. To stop this work, prison doors are opened and sometimes the crown and the throne are offered when the missionary work becomes a success story in spite of violence and oppression, then the strategy of affluence is made use of to divert attention from the work. This comes as a most severe test because the people find breaking iron chains easy but will offer themselves happily to be manacled in gold. In this trial, success comes to those who scorn the greatest happiness that this world offers and who consider every difficulty here bearable in comparison with the punishment in the Hereafter, and who look upon success in the Hereafter as genuine success.

فَمَنْ ذُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ  
الْعُرُودِ ۝

*"Only he who is saved far from the fire and admitted to the Garden will have succeeded: for the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception."*

(Qur'an 3:185)

When the preacher of Islam announces that the Day of Judgment will surely arrive and nothing will hinder

man's journey towards his fate, rationality is alerted towards the need to treat the matter on a war footing. A person who is not forewarned can afford to take it easy but the person whose duty is to warn others day and night can ill-afford to do so. If the warner's life does not reflect the fear of the Hereafter, then people will treat him as a Cassandra prophet who wants to disturb the luxury and peace of others by sounding a false alarm. God has ordered that man should try to save others from the punishment of the Hereafter and that simultaneously he should try to save himself from it. Like everyone, he is in need of salvation too. If a man saves others but he himself jumps into the fire of hell, it will be the worst type of suicide. Every deed of man is subject to divine scrutiny and full compensation is in store. Salvation is reserved for him who accepts and follows the religion of God in all sincerity.

A man who is focused upon this terrible Day will constantly worry about his fate. It may not be proper to presume that one who warns others to keep off from God's punishment will voluntarily give himself up to it. Such audacity is possible for a man whose tongue mechanically repeats the word 'Hereafter' but whose mind has switched off that concept from its circuit and treats reward and punishment subconsciously as some kind of poetical imagery.





### III C. The Noble Qur'an

(The Last Scripture from Allah)

#### (i) Introducing the Qur'an

The last revelation from Allah is the noble Qur'an. This contains guidance for the whole of mankind. هُدًى (2:185) It is the key to their success and prosperity in this world and to their victory and salvation in the Hereafter. It can be identified with the steady, steadfast, and straight course of existence. There are several ways open to man and this Book shows that plain and true way to a seeker, who by following it guards himself against waywardness. If a person shuns the way shown by the Qur'an, the true destination will be out of bounds for him.

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ۝ يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ رِضْوَانَهُ  
سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ  
مُسْتَقِيمٍ ①

*"There hath come to you from Allah a (new) light and a perspicuous Book, -wherewith Allah guideth all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and safety, and leadeth them out of darkness, by His will, unto the light, -guideth them to a path that is straight."*

(Qur'an 5:15, 16)

The noble Qur'an contains good news as well as a warning, good news to those who follow the path shown by it and a warning of everlasting doom to those who go away from it.

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ  
الْصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَثِيرًا ۖ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ أَعْتَدْنَا  
لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

*"Verily this Qur'an doth guide to that which is most right (or stable) and giveth the glad tidings to the Believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a magnificent reward. And to those who believe not in the Hereafter, (it announceth) that we have prepared for them a chastisement grievous (indeed)."*  
(Qur'an 17:9,10)

The noble Qur'an contains the voice of true human nature. Man has to respond to this voice spontaneously but, in general, man does not do so. There are many internal and external reasons for it. The Qur'an reminds man of his nature's forgotten lesson and invites him to accept the Truth. That is why, the Qur'an is described as 'Thikr' - Reminder. Torah was given to Moses and Aaron (peace be on them both) and it distinguished truth from falsehood and contained guidance and light, and a reminder to those who feared Allah and the Hereafter, and contained commandments and a body of laws. However, in course of time the Torah was subjected to interpolations. Then this Qur'an was sent down.

وَهَذَا ذِكْرٌ مُبَارَكٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ أَفَأَنْتُمْ لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

*"And this is a blessed message which we have sent down: will ye then reject it?" (Qur'an 21:50)*

The Qur'an tells the rejectionists:

بَلْ أَتَيْنَهُمْ بِذِكْرِهِمْ فَهُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِهِمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

*"Nay, we have sent them their admonition, but they turn away from their admonition." (Qur'an 23:71)*

'Thikr', a reminder, is a term which contains an idea of high status and greatness because the Qur'an is a source of exaltation for humankind.

لَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ كِتَابًا فِيهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

*"We have revealed for you (O men!) a book which will give you eminence. Will ye not then understand?"*

*(Qur'an 21:10)*

Man is an enemy unto himself and works against his own welfare if he rejects the Qur'an. He thus exposes himself to being quizzed:

وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ لَكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ ۖ وَسَوْفَ تُسْأَلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

*"The Qur'an is indeed a Reminder for thee and for thy people; and soon shall ye (all) be brought to account."*

*(Qur'an 43:44)*

The whole of the Qur'an is true and does not and can not contain even an iota of falsehood.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِالذِّكْرِ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَإِنَّهُ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٥﴾ لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ ۖ تَنْزِيلٌ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ ﴿٤٦﴾

*"Those who reject the Message when it comes to them (are not hidden from Us). And indeed it is a Book of exalted power. No falsehood can approach it from before or behind it: it is sent down by one full of wisdom, worthy of all praise." (Qur'an 41: 41,42)*

Allah has assured us that He will preserve the Qur'an's purity of text.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَنَظُّونَ ۝

*"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)."*

*(Qur'an 15:9)*

This promise of Allah was fulfilled. Among the holy Books, the Qur'an alone enjoys today the status of a well-preserved Scripture. Even today it is read and taught in the same way as it was sent down to Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) and as it was heard from his sacred mouth. In every epoch thousands committed it to memory and recited it. As it is a sacred Book, it was recorded in a written form from the first day and was published in different parts of the world and has been in print at all times. Not a word or a tittle was altered and now the possibility of such alteration is totally ruled out.

This is a perspicuous Book (12:1) revealed in perspicuous Arabic (16:103). The purpose of its revelation, the thrust, and the theme - everything is clearly expressed. Its topics are free from tortuous

complexities of thought.

وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ۚ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ۝

*"By the Book that makes things clear, -We have made it a Qur'an in Arabic, that ye may be able to understand."*

(Qur'an 43: 2,3)

It poses no problem to read it to comprehend it, and to become familiar with its instructions. The most subtle and delicate issues of life have been so discussed that a man of average understanding can easily grasp the discussion. He can easily find out the Qur'anic standpoint on any issue. The Qur'an addresses every individual.

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ ۝

*"And We have indeed made the Qur'an easy to understand and remember: then is there any that will receive admonition."*

(Qur'an 54:17)

The Qur'an demands that it should be heard in silence and with attention and then its authentic truth will become manifest.

هَذَا بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝ وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۝

*"This is (nothing but) lights from your Lord, and guidance, and mercy, for who have faith. When the Qur'an is read, listen to it with attention, and hold your peace: that ye may receive mercy."*

(Qur'an 7:203,204)

The Qur'an frequently persuades us to ponder over its

verses, as it is confident that men of discernment will not reject it but will stand to gain by it immensely.

كُتِبَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا الْآيَاتِ وَيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ۝

*"Here is a Book which We have sent down unto thee, full of blessings, that they may meditate on its signs, and that men of understanding may receive admonition."*  
(Qur'an 38:29)

## (ii) The Reaction of the Denigrators

The denigrators adopted a strange posture as a reaction to the scripture of Allah. They did not look for the truth in the Qur'an; instead, they demanded miracles. The Qur'an is a miracle too on account of its unique expression and sublime precepts. There is no need for another miracle. The Qur'an says:

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ۝ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً وَذِكْرَىٰ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

*"Yet they say: 'Why are not signs sent down to him from his Lord?' Say: 'The signs are indeed with Allah: and I am indeed a clear warner! And is it not enough for them that We have sent down to thee the Book which is rehearsed to them? Verily, in it is mercy and a reminder to those who believe.'" (Qur'an 29: 50,51)*

The holy Qur'an is divided into Suras and the smallest Sura is numbered 108, consisting of three verses. The biggest Sura is the second Sura, consisting of 286 verses. Whether small or big, every Sura is a miracle.

The denigrators are asked to present one Sura like the Sura of the Qur'an. They have not accepted this challenge. This is a proof that the Qur'an is divine in origin and not a human composition.

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ ۖ وَادْعُوا  
شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

*"And if ye are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant, then produce a Sura like thereunto; and call your witnesses or helpers (if there are any) besides Allah, if ye are truthful."*

(Qur'an 2:23)

The Qur'an was inviting people to scrutinize and analyse its verses but the denigrators invoked national, racial and tribal prejudices to keep people off the Qur'an. Instead of understanding a discourse in the light of proofs, they zealously upheld old traditions and obsolete thoughts as it never occurred to them that they could be wrong. They worshipped the past glory blindly. Their ancestors were superior to and greater than all others in knowledge and wisdom. No one can go farther than they had gone. Whatever they said or did was true and authentic. No one had the right to criticise them. "To point out a mistake in a genius is a very grave mistake indeed." - or so the saying goes.

Such an attitude is unscientific and unreasonable. The Qur'an warns the seeker after truth to give up such an attitude.



وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا  
أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

*"When it is said to them: 'Follow what Allah hath revealed', they say: 'Nay! We shall follow the ways of our fathers! What! Even though their fathers were void of wisdom and guidance? (Qur'an 2:170)"*

One after another, the Qur'anic precepts backed by proofs were coming to light and were criticising in a cultured and decent manner the false thoughts and attitudes of the denigrators and reminding them of the fate that was destined for them in this world and the next. However, they were responding in an over-emotional manner and by creating din and bustle and making violent protests they sought to suppress the voice of the Qur'an.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَسْمَعُوا لِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١﴾  
*"The unbelievers say: Listen not to this Qur'an, but talk at random in the midst of its (reading), that ye may gain the upper hand!" (Qur'an 41:26)*

They resorted to diversionary tactics like games, pastimes and cultural programmes. They made arrangements to create an atmosphere of sensuality and entertainment in the hope of diverting attention from the serious teachings of the Qur'an. This was a fair index of the fact that they were discomfited in the arena of intellectual conflict but were not prepared to acknowledge this discomfiture as they were intoxicated

by might and authority. They tried to demonstrate that the message of the Qura'n was not worthy of their consideration and it was infra dig for them to pay attention to it.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ  
وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ۝ وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا وَتِلْكَ  
مُسْتَكْبَرًا كَانَتْ تِلْكَ تُذُنًا لِّهِ وَتِلْكَ تُذُنًا لِّهِ وَتِلْكَ تُذُنًا لِّهِ ۝

*"But there are, among men, those who purchase idle tales, without knowledge (or meaning). To mislead (men) from the Path of Allah and throw ridicule (on the Path): for such there will be a humiliating chastisement. When Our signs are rehearsed to such a one, he turns away in arrogance, as if he heard them not, as if there were deafness in both his ears: announce to him a grievous chastisement." (Qur'an 31: 6,7)*

This improper behaviour is the biggest obstruction on the path to Truth. One cannot reach Truth by adopting such a posture. As a result, the Qur'an, which should have torn the screen of falsehood to pieces, became a veil for the denigrators.

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ جَعَلْنَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ حِجَابًا  
مُّسْتَوْرًا ۚ وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۚ وَإِذَا  
ذُكِّرَتْ رَأْيَكَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ وَحْدَهُ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَذْبَارِهِمْ نُفُورًا ۝

*"When thou recite the Qur'an, We put between thee and those who believe not in the Hereafter, a veil invisible. And We put coverings over their hearts (and minds) lest they should understand the Qur'an, and*

*deafness into their ears: When thou dost mention thy Lord - and Him alone - in the Qur'an, they turn on their back fleeing (from the Truth)." (Qur'an 17: 45,46)*

The people who adopt such an attitude towards the Qur'an today will wring their hands in regret tomorrow and bemoan, "Woe unto us! Our leaders have ruined us. If we had not followed them, we would not have come to such a pass!"

The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) would lodge a complaint in this regard in these words:

وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَرْبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا ۝

*"Then the Messenger will say: O my Lord, truly my people treated this Qur'an with neglect." (Qur'an 25:30)*

### **(iii) Demands made upon Muslims by the Qur'an**

The Qur'an makes certain demands upon the people of faith who believe that the Qur'an is a Book sent down by God and who look upon it as a source of guidance and salvation. These demands are but a direct result of faith and cannot be brushed aside by one who believes that the Qur'an is the Book of God.

#### **(a) Hold firmly to the Qur'an**

The first and foremost demand is to hold firmly to the Qur'an and hold it dearly to the heart and demonstrate this attachment in practice. At the most critical juncture

of life and at any stage one should not let the Qur'an go. Instead one should remain fastened to its guidance. John the Baptist was given this advice:

يَايَحْيَىٰ خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ

*"O Yahya! Take hold of the Book with might."*

*(Qur'an 19:12)*

The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) is addressed thus:

فَاسْتَمْسِكْ بِالْأَيْمَىٰ ۖ إِلَيْكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

*"So hold thou fast to the Revelation sent down to thee: verily thou art on a straight way."*

*(Qur'an 43: 43)*

The Prophet was advised to hold on firmly to the Book that was being revealed and he was reassured that the straight way was clear to him in the light provided by the Book and that he was pursuing the right way. Anyone following the way indicated by the Book should have the satisfaction that he was pursuing the right way and would definitely reach the right destination. The strong belief that he is in the right and going along the right path produces confidence and courage and renders the difficulties on the way easy. Technically it is described as "Tamassuk bil kitab." This enables a person not only to keep steadily going along the right way but also to emerge as a world leader and reformer. The world secures reform and betterment through this quality which is a characteristic of reformers.

وَالَّذِينَ يُسْتَكُونُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ وَاقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ ۖ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُهُمْ أَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ ۝

*"As to those who hold fast by the Book and establish regular Prayer, - never shall we suffer the reward of the righteous to perish."* (Qur'an 7:170)

There is no gainsaying the fact that only those who uphold the Book and establish Prayer can perform the duty of world reform. Allah will approve of their effort and they will deserve reward which will not be wasted. It was not and will not be possible to effect world reform without guidance from the Qur'an and without the establishment of Prayer.

#### (b) Recitation of the Qur'an

The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) is ordered:

وَ أَتْلُ مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ ۚ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ ۚ وَ لَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُلْتَحَدًا ۝

*"And recite (and teach) what has been revealed to thee of the Book of thy Lord: none can change His words, and none wilt thou find as a refuge other than Him."*

(Qur'an 18:27)

And again:

أَتْلُ مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

*"Recite what is sent of the Book by inspiration to thee, and establish regular prayer."* (Qur'an 29:45)

This order is applicable to his followers too. 'Tilawat' includes reading, understanding, thinking deeply. This

recitation should not be formal but genuine and its effect should be prominent on the heart and the body. One should tremble and the limbs should be awe-struck. This will indicate that man is deriving benefit from the Book and has secured the way of guidance.

اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْكِتَابِ مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانٍ تَنْقَسِرُ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ ۝

*"Allah has revealed (from time to time) the most beautiful Message in the form of a Book, consistent with itself, (yet) repeating (its teaching in various aspects): the skins of those who fear their Lord tremble thereat; then their skins and their hearts do soften to the remembrance of Allah. Such is the guidance of Allah; He guides therewith whom He pleases, but such as Allah leaves to stray, can have none to guide."* (Qur'an 39:23)

The pure emotions that are stirred by the recitation of the Qur'an are also felt by just listening to it. The listener feels in his blood and along his heart a sense of majestic awe and his faith is increased. Dependence on and trust in God begin to grow. This emotional state is described thus:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝

*"Believers are those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His*

*revelations rehearsed, find their faith strengthened,  
and put (all) their trust in their Lord." (Qur'an 8:2)*

The denigrators saw in the Qur'an nothing more than the fables of the past heroes (Asaateer -ul-Awwaleen) (6:25) The Qur'an was just a narrative document. Its precepts had no appeal for them. The attitude of the believers towards the Qur'an was totally different. They kept their eyes and ears open. Their moral fibre tingled with its ethical values. The Qur'an cast a different spell on their listening skill.

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا ۝

*"Those who, when they are admonished with their signs of their Lord, droop not down at them as if they were deaf or blind."* (Qur'an 25:73)

Racial prejudice held the Jews in thrall as they traced their descent from Jacob (peace be upon him), who was a son of Issac (peace be upon him), who was a son of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). The Jews were not prepared to accept any Gentile as a Messenger of God simply because he was not a descendant of Isaac. They rejected Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) as a prophet and the Qur'an as a scripture and opposed both because he was a descendant of Ishmael, the elder son of Prophet Abraham. There were others among the Jews who were exempt from this prejudice and studied the Torah properly and came to the conclusion that the Qur'an is the Book of Allah,

confirmed its divine origin and believed in it. Such devotees of truth are mentioned in this verse:

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَتَّى تَلَائِهِمْ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ  
بِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

*"Those to whom We have given the Book study it as it should be studied: they are the ones that believe therein: those who reject faith therein, -the loss is their own."*  
(Qur'an 2:121)

The expression to be noted is not merely 'study it' but also 'as it should be studied.' A genuine study of the Torah leads to belief in the Qur'an. Those who did not study the Torah or did not study it as it should be studied remained without the riches of faith. This proves again that when the Book is read as it should be read, belief comes as an asset. Well-grounded in knowledge are those who were well-versed in the art of Scriptural reading and were blessed with belief in the Qur'an.

لَكِنَّ الرَّاغِبِينَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا  
أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ...

*"But those among them who are well- grounded in knowledge, and the Believers believe in what hath been revealed to thee and what was revealed before thee."*  
(Qur'an 4:162)

The impact of listening to the Qur'an is described in the following verses.

قُلْ آمِنُوا بِهِ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوا ۚ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُثَلَّ



عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا ۖ وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنْ كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا ۝ وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا ۝

*"It is true that those who were given knowledge beforehand, when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in humble prostration, and they say: 'Glory to our Lord! Truly has the promise of our Lord been fulfilled! They fall down on their faces in tears, and it increases their (earnest) humility." (Quran 17:107-109)*

It is stated in another place that:

إِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ آيَاتُ الرَّحْمَنِ خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَبُكِيًّا ۝

*"Whenever the signs of (Allah) Most Gracious were rehearsed to them, they would fall down in prostrate adoration and tears." (Qur'an 19:58)*

Some Christian scholars and divines who prefer truth react similarly:

وَ إِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَى أَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ وَمَا عَلَّمُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّمَا فَاكْتُتِبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ۝ وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَ نَطَعُ أَنْ يُدْخِلَنَا رَبُّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الصَّالِحِينَ ۝

*"And when they listen to the revelation received by the Messenger, thou wilt see their eyes over-flowing with tears, for they recognise the truth: They pray "Our Lord! We believe, write us down among the witnesses; What cause can we have not to believe in Allah and the truth which has come to us, seeing that we long for our Lord to admit us to the company of the righteous?" (Qur'an 5:83,84)*

This type of responsive recitation is what Allah expects of us. Reading and hearing the Quran in this way will remove the corrosion of the heart. Man can see himself in this mirror. Desire to ameliorate the condition is born. Attachment to Allah and reverential submissiveness to Him will be fostered. The latent truths and insights of the Qur'an come to light. One experiences the sweetness of faith, the grace to perform good deeds, boldness and courage, and the gift of steadfastness.

### (c) Guidance from the Qur'an

The Qur'an is the source of guidance. It provides man with the blueprint of a lifestyle desired by God. It shows the direction in which man is expected to proceed despite the vicissitudes in order to become worthy of God's reward. If a man clings to the Qur'an, he will not veer to the right or the left like the blind but will complete the journey of life on a well-lit pathway. The Qur'an distinguishes between Truth and falsehood. One who does not have the criterion of the Qur'an can never know what truth is or what falsehood is. The Qur'an is a light assisting us to know what God likes. Without the Qur'an, one can never ascertain what God wants us to do, access to His will will not be available.

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ۝ يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ  
سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ

*"There hath come to you from Allah a (new) light and*

*a perspicuous Book - Wherewith Allah guideth all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and safety."*

*(Qur'an 5: 15,16)*

By temperament man likes certain things and dislikes certain other things. Inclinations vary from man to man. The habits and inclinations so integral to your temperament and so dominant in your pattern of thinking may be totally unacceptable to me. Only when his inclinations are subordinated to God's order man can become pious and God-fearing. His acts of omission and commission should not be determined by his inclinations. He should get ready to implement the order given by his Master, whether his inclination is for it or against it. If Allah orders he should unhesitatingly throw away all those things which he holds dear to his heart and without which he cannot live. Man cannot become truly pious when he cannot subordinate his ideas, inclinations and habits. He will be following the dictates of his desires even though in his opinion he may be trying to please God. On the Day of Judgment he will realize that he had been gratifying his self under the illusion that he was obeying God.

The Book of Allah is that instrument with whose help man can find out whether he has been following God's will or satisfying personal wish. A man who tries to find out whether God is happy or displeased without reference to this Book is a man wandering in wilderness.

He may wander throughout his life but he is not going to reach his destination.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُبِينًا ۖ  
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ ۖ وَ  
يَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ۝

*"O mankind! Verily there hath come to you a convincing proof from your Lord for We have sent unto you a light (that is) manifest. Then those who believe in Allah and hold fast to Him-soon He will admit them to Mercy and Grace from Himself, and guide them to Himself by a straight way."*

(Qur'an 4: 174,175)

The holy Qur'an is the key which opens the doors of God's mercy. Man can find out Allah's likes and dislikes, the etiquette of life that pleases God and the conduct that displeases Him, what actions please Him and what actions displease Him. Fortunate is the man who recites the Book, who ponders over it day and night, who remembers many of its verses, and on whose personality its directives predominate. Even monarchs with all their crowns and thrones may have to envy such a person because what they have will decline and fall and what he has is not subject to depletion. Moreover, they are vulnerable to God's chastisement in future in spite of all their regalia whereas Allah will shower His choicest blessings on him.

### (d) Obedience to the Qur'anic Orders

Seeking guidance from the Qur'an involves obedience to the Qur'anic edicts in all matters, and rejection of guidance from other sources.

اِطِيعُوا مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

*"Follow (O men!) the revelation given unto you from your Lord, and follow not, as friends or protectors, other than Him. Little it is ye remember of admonition."*

(Qur'an 7-3)

There may be many systems of thought and philosophy not derived from God. In contrast, the Qur'an presents a philosophy of divine origin dealing with life. Naturally it is superior and the only philosophy based on truth. The believers construct their lives on its basis as a token of their wisdom and farsightedness.

وَالَّذِينَ اجْتَنَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ أَنْ يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَى ۚ فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ ۚ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٧٨﴾

*"Those who eschew Taghut and fall not into its worship, -and turn to Allah (in repentance), - for them is good news: so announce the good news to my servants, - Those who listen to the Word, and follow the best of it: those are the ones who Allah has guided, and those are the ones endued with understanding."*

(Qur'an 39:17,18)

### **(e) Activity in accordance with the Qur'an**

In 39:18, it is stated that those who follow the Qur'an are gifted with guidance and intelligence.

If a man casts his whole life in the mould of the Qur'an, it is a token of his belief in the Qur'an. If a man claims orally that the Qur'an is his model and his activity does not substantiate his claim, then he is being unfair to the Qur'an. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) maintained: Those who act in keeping with the Qur'anic edicts are the people who espouse the Qur'an.

(Sahih Muslim, Kitab on the travellers, Salat, chapter on the merits of the Qur'an recitation; Jami Tirmithi, Kitab on the merits of the Qur'an, chapter on Surah Aale Imran)

People in general have prescribed certain characteristics of saints devoted to Allah. In reality, there is only one characteristic for them. It is that the splendour of the Qur'an is manifest in their lives. If a man manages to reach the skies without the aid of the Qur'an, he will not be privileged to secure mercy and blessing of God. Only that person meets God and merits His pleasure who follows the Qur'an and nothing but the Qur'an. It is not by a formally designed uniform or specially prepared cuisine that a person is recognized as a saint. When the Qur'an is given the role of arbitration in his affairs, then that person is identified as a saint. The devotees of God perform every deed in the light of the Qur'an to the extent

that it rules over their lives. If this rule is not available in a person's life, it indicates that he is far away from God and God is far away from him.

#### **(f) A call towards the Qur'an**

The Qur'an is a call, an invitation. This does not find a way into a person stealthily. It brings about a radical change. There will be a turbulence in his thought and action. When he accepts this call, his whole life is subjected to chaotic conditions. The edifice of old views has to be demolished before the edifice of new ideas is constructed. Numerous loved things have to be relinquished and numerous new things have to be accommodated. The neophyte not only undergoes these changes but also desires that others too should give up what he has given up and others too should be enriched with the wealth that has come to him and that the views and postulates that he has embraced as true should dominate every nook and cranny of the world.

The most successful man in this world is one who follows the Qur'an and who invites others too to do so. Obedience to the Qur'an is obedience to Allah and calling others to the Qur'an is an invitation to them to accept Allah. This constitutes the most successful way of living and this call is the best that human ears can hear.

The Qur'an is a means of securing prestige and an upper hand. A person who lives by the ideals of the

Qur'an and persuades others to follow suit is pursuing the path of success and persuading others to do so. There will be no need for him to ever think that he has wasted any part of his energy and talent in this process. The result of diverting one's energy for the promotion of a cause other than that of the Qur'an will certainly be a deep regret.

Throughout the history of the prophets, Allah's world always appeared as a manifestation of His power.. If a weak nation accepts this word, it becomes strong; if an inferior nation accepts the word of God, it becomes superior and far outshines other superior individuals and groups in a short duration. It is equipped with power and governance and it becomes an arbitrator in the disputes between nations and groups.

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَ  
نَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ ۖ

*"And We wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs."* (Qur'an 28:5)

The exalted Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) said with regard to this Book of God.

ان الله يرفع بهذا الكتاب اقواما ويضع به اخرين

*Verily Allah exalts certain nations through the Qur'an and degrades certain others through it.*

(Sahih Muslim, Kitabus Salath of travellers, chapter Fadal man yaqoomu lil Qur'an wa yalamhu)



The holy Qur'an came to determine who should be exalted and who should be humiliated. The nation that adopts this Book as its own will increase its authority in the comity of nations and no power will be able to defeat it. The force that attacks it will be smashed to smithereens. The Qur'an is the constitution of God's government. God's hand is in that hand that holds it up.

وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ

*"When thou threwest (a handful of dust), it was not thy act but Allah's."* (Qur'an 8:17)

In another context, the Qur'an states:

فَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَكْذِبُونَكَ وَلَكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

*"It is not thee they reject: it is the signs of Allah which the wicked deny."* (Qur'an 6:33)

It is obvious that no one can triumph over a person who enjoys the patronage of God because making war upon him is tantamount to making war upon God. That hand cannot remain safe which tries to grapple with Allah's hand.

### **III D. Prayer and Preaching**

When you look up references to Prayer in the holy Qur'an, you realize how of primary importance and the greatest duty Prayer is. It is the most important pillar of Islam. There is no better, higher and superior way of remembering Allah than that of Prayer. Regular observance of Prayer ensures that one does not forget Allah. How do we turn to Allah? Through Prayer. How do we get the grace to repent? Through Prayer. How are our sins forgiven? Through Prayer. Purification of self, enhanced beauty of character, planned betterment of life's affairs - all these can be achieved through the instrument of Prayer. The superhighway of guidance gets illumined and pursuing it is rendered easy by Prayer.

The most important mark of identity of a God-fearing and pious human being is his observance of Prayer. It proves that he has unassailable belief in the existence of God, that he is at his beck and call and that he stands for unquestioning loyalty to God.

In the lives and teachings of all God's Messengers, Prayer occupies a predominant place. They repeatedly insisted upon their respective followers that they should

be strict in the observance of Prayer and took a pledge from them in this regard and prohibited both abandonment of and indifference to Prayer and warned them of dire consequences if Prayer was neglected in their lives..

Prayer is abandoned in communities noted for their deviation from and disregard of the teachings and instructions of the Prophets. The Qur'an asserts that the rebels and rejecters are not willing to bow and prostrate before the **One** God. Their lives are without Prayer and without light. Consequently they think and act in a perverted manner and wander hither and thither. Ultimately the Hereafter will appear exposing their failure and frustration before their eyes and their situation would be beyond redemption.

Each Prayer with its own time schedule is to be compulsorily offered five times a day. Observance of the schedule is necessary. Mandatory Prayers have to be offered in the mosques. Construction of and attendance in mosques are encouraged as a sign of faith. It is binding upon Muslims to offer mandatory Prayers in the mosques and the excellence of such a practice can be gauged from the fact that it fetches a reward twenty-five or twenty-seven times greater than the reward given for praying at home.

The significance of enjoined ancillary Prayers (sunan makkida) is next only to that of compulsory main Prayer

as the practice of the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) with regard to it has been consistent. They cannot be neglected wantonly. In addition, there is an exhortation to offer the third category of Prayers. This extra category is known as 'Nawafil' because it is additional and optional. Every time a Muslim prostrates with his face to the ground, his sins are forgiven and he is upgraded. 'Tahajjud', a prayer usually offered during the small hours preceding the dawn, is a powerful means of getting closer to God. For the Messenger of Allah, (blessings and peace be upon him) this Prayer was compulsory and not optional. A special feature of saintly persons is that they keep awake to stand and wait on Allah when others are fast asleep.

In the time schedule for each Prayer, the earlier it is offered, the better. Undue postponement in this matter is undesirable. Each component of Prayer must be offered in a calm and peaceful manner. Undue haste in completing the Prayer gives the impression that the worshipper looks upon Prayer as a burden which should be off-loaded as quickly as possible. If the act of touching the ground with the face is completed in the twinkling of an eye, it will be like a cock pecking at the foodgrain on the ground. The Prayer should not be offered without interest and attention. Reverential submissiveness should characterise it. It should mirror a deep emotional state of contrition and constant turning

towards God. (In a book under preparation I hope to deal with all these aspects of Salath in a detailed and convincing manner, Insha Allah.)

Keeping in mind the significance of Prayer and its role in establishing and strengthening the relationship with Allah, a Muslim cannot afford to neglect it. He will make it an integral part of his life and give it a most visible prominence in all his activities. The preachers of Islam, in particular, have to perform the Prayers dutifully. In no circumstance should they neglect them. What is of primary importance in religion should continue to have that status. By relegating or renouncing it, one cannot do justice to the task of preaching Islam.

### **(i) The Relationship between Missionary Work and Prayer**

The relationship between the task of preaching and Prayer is too deep to separate. Both in the initial and the final stages of preaching, Prayer is emphasized. When the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) was entrusted with the task of preaching, he was asked to offer Tahajjud Prayer. As he was busy during the daytime, he was asked to remember God during the night.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْمُومُ ۖ قُمْ الْبَيْلَ إِلَّا قَيْلًا ۖ نَصْفَةَ أَوْ انْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَيْلًا ۖ أَوْ زِدْ  
عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَ رَّبِّي الْقُرْآنَ تَرْبِيًا ۖ إِنَّا سَنُنْفِقُ عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ۖ إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ  
الْبَيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً ۚ وَ أَقْوَمُ قَيْلًا ۖ إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْعًا طَوِيلًا ۖ وَادْكُرْ

اَسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَ تَهْتَئِلُ اِلَيْهِ تَتَبَيَّلًا ۝ رَبُّ الشَّرْقِ وَ الْمَغْرِبِ لَا اِلَهَ اِلَّا هُوَ  
فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ۝

*"O thou folded in garments! Stand (to prayer) by night, but not all night, -half of it, -or a little less, or a little more; recite the Qur'an in slow, measured rhythmic tones. Soon shall We send down to thee a mighty word. Truly the rising by night is a time when impression is more keen and speech more certain. True, there is for thee by day prolonged occupation with ordinary duties; but keep in remembrance the name of thy Lord, and devote thyself to Him whole-heartedly. (He is) Lord of the East and the West; there is no God but He: Take Him therefore for (thy) Disposer of affairs."* (Qur'an 73:1-9)

A person who has to attend to a great deal of work and later is overtaken with fatigue must be advised to take rest during the night but here the Prophet is advised to offer a long Prayer. This is an indication that the strength to carry on the mighty missionary work can be derived only from such a nocturnal Prayer. After a sustained endeavour spanning twenty-three years, the Prophet succeeded in his mission, the might of the tribe of Quraish was broken, Makkah was conquered, and the Kaaba, God's house, came under the custody of God's servants. On that historic occasion, he was asked to bow his head and glorify God.

اِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللّٰهِ وَالْفَتْحُ ۝ وَ رَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُوْنَ فِيْ دِيْنِ اللّٰهِ اَفْوَاجًا ۝  
فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُ ۚ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ۝

*"When comes the help of Allah, and victory, and thou dost see the people enter Allah's religion in crowds, celebrate the praises of thy Lord, and seek forgiveness from Him for He is oft-returning (in forgiveness)".*

*(Qur'an 110)*

The way the Qur'an has linked the missionary work and Prayer needs elaboration. While ordering Muslims to carry on the work of preaching, the Qur'an invariably insists that care should be taken to perform Prayers because the strength, the energy and the competence needed to preach can be secured through Prayers only.

## **(ii) Remembrance of God and Prayers**

The Qur'an describes the task of calling people to faith as an act of reminding (Tathkeer) people about God. The soul of religion is nothing but remembering God. Religion does its best to ensure that man does not forget God and that he remembers Him always. The heart which has forgotten God lies in ruins, where no lamp is kindled. It is man's duty to remember God who is his Creator, Owner, God. Temperamental forgetfulness, domination of desires, wrong instruction and training are some of the reasons leading to neglect of God. Preaching aims at awakening man, dispelling his ignorance, and bringing him closer to God. The exalted Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) was ordered:

فَذَكِّرْ إِنْ نَفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَى ۖ سَيَذَكَّرُ مَنْ يَخْشَى ۚ

*"Therefore give admonition in case the admonition*

*profits (the hearer). He will heed who fears."* (Qur'an 87:9,10)

To draw the attention of others towards God and to foster His remembrance, it is necessary that one who takes up this job should not have forgotten God. When the remembrance of God has not filled his own heart, how can he foster it in the hearts of others? One who wants to remember God should not neglect Prayers. Prayer is not only the best means to remember God but also the remembrance of God per se. That is why, it is said:

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

*"And establish regular prayer, for My remembrance."*

(Qur'an 20:14)

Prayer! Thy name is remembrance of God! In the Qur'an, the remembrance of God is described as a very great thing. The fact is that the dead hearts are quickened through this remembrance and the Prayer is the means to it. Prayer draws the attention of man towards God and does not allow him to forget God. It is a fact that only that person who is ever focused upon God can invite people to remember God and make them remember Him.

### **(iii) Prayer and being Witnesses before mankind**

The Qur'an described the task of preaching as an act of being Allah's witnesses before mankind. Preachers have to present Allah's religion and bear testimony to its truth. This stupendous work can be executed only by a



man whose life is cast in the mould of religion. If there is a hiatus between his precept and practice, he cannot discharge the duty of bearing testimony before mankind. Man's life becomes a model of religious living through Prayer and he becomes eligible to present Islam before others and to bear witness through action. In the following verse, the Qur'an mentions Prayer immediately after asking Muslims to bear testimony to the truth of Islam before mankind.

لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ ۚ فَأَقِمُْوا الصَّلَاةَ

وَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ ۚ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۚ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ الْحَافِظُ

*"The Messenger may be a witness for you, and ye be witnesses for mankind! So establish regular Prayer, give Zakat, and hold fast to Allah! He is your Protector - the best to protect and the best to help!" (Qur'an 22:78)*

#### (iv) Fostering Good, Fighting Evil and Prayer

A Qur'anic synonym for calling people to faith is enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil. God has ordered us to do certain things; the world should be told what those things are. God has ordered us not to do certain things; the world should be forbidden from doing them. The Muslim community is the best community 'Khair-e-ummah' because it believes in and serves God and because it seeks the cooperation of the world in the campaign for the promotion of all that is good and the prevention of all that is evil.

High morals and strong character are needed for this campaign. It is necessary that the preacher should cling to what is good and keep off all bad things. Otherwise he will find the campaign very hard indeed. Defective character is of no use. Prayer enables a person to practise what is good and renounce what is pernicious.

اقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ۚ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۚ

*"Establish regular Prayer; for Prayer restrains from shameful and evil deeds."* (Qur'an 29:45)

The holy Qur'an has found fault with the commoners and the divines among the People of the Book because they are caught in the rat race, forgetful of the Hereafter, and because their morality leaves much to be desired. At the same time it has commended virtuous and righteous people among them. The Qur'an does not stereotype the community.

لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً ۚ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ ۝ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ۝

*"Not all of them are alike: of the people of the Book are a portion that (stand for the right); they rehearse the signs of Allah all night long, and they prostrate themselves in adoration. They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong: and they hasten (in emulation) in (all) good works."* (Qur'an 3: 113,114)

Eight characteristics of good and pious Jews and

Christians are enumerated here; these characteristics mutually reinforce each other. They are necessary for the campaign of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. Reading the Scripture, keeping awake for prayers in the night, and Prayers are prominent characteristics needed for the campaign. The relationship between Prayer and the campaign for the promotion of good the prohibition of evil becomes crystal clear.

The most important order of God and the greatest good is Prayer. If this is ignored, other good things can be easily ignored too. The Qur'an comments on the later generations of some followers of exalted Prophets as follows:

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهَوَاتِ

*"But after them there followed a posterity who missed Prayers and followed their lusts."* (Qur'an 19:59)

This makes it clear that neglect of prayers precedes enslavement to lust. Such a negligent person can be a devil's agent and not a servant of God's religion.

#### **(v) Campaign for world Reform and Prayer**

The call to faith is an attempt at reform too. Allah's earth should be purged of all mischief and vitiation. Ignoring Allah's religion and the limits and restraints prescribed, people cannot reform others; they can only vitiate the atmosphere. They are not qualified for world leadership. They are disobedient and make others

disobedient. They can lead only towards destruction. Keeping a distance from them is the safe course. Prophet Salih (peace be upon him) told the nation of Thamud:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ۚ الَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

*"But fear Allah and obey me; and follow not the bidding of those who are extravagant, who make mischief in the land, and mend not (their ways)."*

(Qur'an 26:150-152)

Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him) comments on his own endeavours:

إِنْ أُرِيدُ إِلَّا الْإِصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ ۚ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿٨٨﴾

*"I only desire (your) betterment to the best of my power; and my success (in my task) can only come from Allah. In Him I trust, and unto Him I turn."*

(Qur'an 11:88)

The Messengers of Allah aim at reform. Two guidelines are needed for this great job - seek guidance from the Scripture and strengthen your relationship with God through Prayer. God says:

وَالَّذِينَ يَمْسِكُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ ۚ إِنَّا لَا نُنْفِئُهُمْ أَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

*"As to those who hold fast by the Book and establish regular Prayer, -never shall We suffer the reward of the righteous to perish."*

(Qur'an 7:170)

The reformers must be equipped with these two characteristics. They will succeed in their duty and their efforts will not be in vain. Allah will bestow full reward on them.

## (vi) Establishment of Religion and Prayer

The call to faith is in reality an establishment of religion. This process begins with one's own self. If a person does not establish Islam on himself, he cannot establish it on the earth. The role of Prayer in making a person totally submissive to God cannot be exaggerated. One tradition is as follows:

الصلوة عماد الدين ومن اقامها فقد اقام الدين و من هدمها فقد  
هدم الدين -

*"Prayer is a pillar of religion. One who establishes it establishes the religion and one who demolishes Prayer demolishes the religion."*<sup>1</sup>

- (1) The author remembers this Tradition in these words but its source is not remembered. An 'Ahyia Uloomuddin' Imam Ghazzali Quotes this Tradition in these words: *الصلوة عماد الدين فمن تركها فقد علم الدين* (Prayer is a pillar of faith; he who abandons it ruins the edifice of faith.) This Tradition is brief. Allama Iraqi comments on its *رواه البيهقي* في الشعب بسند ضعفه من حديث عمر، قال الحاكم عكرمة لم يسمع من عمر و رواه ابن عمر لم يقف عليه ابن الصلاح فقال في مشكل الوسيط انه *غير معروف* (Ayaya Uloomuddin with Al Moghni Anil Alasfar: 1/175 Darul Kutubul Ilmiya, Beirut. This means that Baihaqi has narrated this Tradition in Shubal Iman from Hazrat Umar and graded it as weak. hakim says that Ikrima has narrated it with Hazrat Umar as its source. Ikrama did not hear it from Hazrat Umar. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar has narrated this Tradition too. Ibne Salah says that he is not familiar with it and described it as not well-known in Mushkilul waseet.

Caliph Umar (May Allah be pleased with him) issued some instructions to his Governors. The initial part is as follows:

ان اهم امور كم عندى الصلوة من حفظها و حافظ عليها حفظ دينه ومن ضيعها فهو لما سواها اضيع.

*"In my opinion, the most important duty is the observance of Prayer. He who takes care of it and meticulously observes it has taken care of his religion. He who is negligent towards it will be more negligent towards other duties."*

(Muatta - Imam Malik, chapter Alwaqoot)

Without this commitment to the institution of Prayer, a person cannot remain steadfast in his religion nor can he invite others towards it.

### **(vii) The Essential Attributes for Missionary Work and Prayer**

Prayer alone fosters the attributes needed for the task of preaching. Some of the attributes are mentioned here.

#### **(a) Patience and Constancy**

Calling people to faith is not a pastime. Infinite patience and Himalayan constancy and fixation are needed. Prayer alone can foster such a temperament. It is stated in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ ۚ

*"Truly man was created, very impatient; fretful when evil touches him; and niggardly when good reaches him, - not so those devoted to Prayer." (Qur'an 70:19-22)*

Carrying on some work for a short period is easy but to persist with it for a longer period is not easy. Some people start the work of preaching with great zeal and ardour but in a short period the zeal wanes and they abandon their work. This clearly points to the fact that in their eyes this work has had no significance neither at the initiation of their work nor at the time of winding it up. The task of preaching should be sustained to the last breath of his life. If you have been a true worshipper, you will be endowed with steadfastness in your mission. Otherwise you will be without this quality. The Qur'an says:

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ

*"Those who remain steadfast to their Prayer."*

*(Qur'an 70:23)*

Steadfastness in prayer ensures steadfastness in religion. You will always obey the instructions of your religion and you will persist with your missionary work.

### **(b) Prayer fosters patience**

Through Prayer, one secures constancy, steadfastness, and patience. Patience has several aspects. One aspect of patience is that man remains unflappable under terrible stress and strain and does not stray from the path

of religion and persists with his missionary work. The quality of patience and constancy is developed through Prayer and the teachings of the Qur'an and Islamic history prove it.

The Meccan period of the propagation of Islam is an era of patience. During this period, the unselfish, highly principled, cultured and innocent person of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) was subjected to a variety of ill-treatment: thorns were spread on his way, he was pelted with stones, anathemas like lunatic, irreligious, story-teller, tutored by others, plagiarist were heaped on him. Such baseless allegations did not provoke him but he continued to preach calmly and patiently, to awaken their conscience, to appeal to their rationality, to encourage them to make a revaluation of their value-system, and to warn them of the evil consequences of their blind opposition. He did what he ought to do in self-justification at a time when opposition to and hostility against him were at their peak.

The same decorous model of behaviour was adopted by his revered companions. When the storm of opposition raged and howled, they remained firm as though they were rocks of patience. Their jihad was unique and so was their patience. This patience was not the helplessness of the impotent and the cowardly but the fortitude of the brave who could court and sport with death. This was the patience of the great sons of that



nation whose habit was to unsheathe the swords on most trivial issues, the fire of whose anger could be extinguished only by revenge, and who did not tolerate any excesses against their friends and allies, and whose injured pride transformed them into enraged lions, and who looked upon tolerance of injustice as an expression of cowardliness and who retaliated against ignorance and barbarism with more severe ignorance and barbarism. It is amazing that Islam tamed members of such a nation, most of whom were youngsters, into men of patience and self-restraint on any provocation and libel, (this transformation has no parallel in the whole history of Makkah) they did not become revengeful against any atrocity, they did not return abuse for abuse, they did not pick their daggers or swords when daggers and swords were raised against them. Prayer fosters such unusual strength of fortitude. That may be the reason why the holy Qur'an, while advising us to be patient, invariably asks us to perform Prayers, One example:

فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ  
الْعُرُودِ ۖ وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَارَ السُّجُودِ ۝

*"Bear them, with patience, all that they say, and celebrate the praises of thy Lord, before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting, and during part of the night, (also) celebrate His praises, and (so likewise) after the prostration."* (Qur'an 50:39,40)

### **(c) Importance of Patience**

Missionaries of Islam are as much in need of patience today as they were in the past. They have to confront two groups of opposition - antireligious and irreligious group on the one hand and a religious Muslim group on the other. The antireligious group is straining every nerve to prove that the missionaries of Islam are conservative, antediluvian, out of touch with the presentday affairs, antinational, unpatriotic and communal. It is not that the antireligious group's allegations are based on their direct knowledge about the missionaries of Islam. The truth is that the antireligious group finds the missionaries of Islam to be an impediment and so makes them a stalking-horse to launch an attack on Islam, its tenets and philosophy of life. Even the Muslim religious group resorts to false accusations such as:

- (1) The missionaries of Islam have wrong beliefs
- (2) They believe in God but reject the Prophet
- (3) They believe in God and the Prophet in a way different from that of the orthodox people
- (4) They believe in political Islam
- (5) They are hungry for power and not interested in piety and godliness.
- (6) They insult the Prophet's Companions (May Allah be pleased with them) and the saints

- (7) They look upon other Muslims as non-Muslims
- (8) They claim that they alone have understood Islam.

All these assertions, you know, are blatant lies, false accusations, and deliberate distortions. In this storm of lies and accusations, you can remain patient and unshaken through Prayer.

#### **(d) Prayer keeps us steady**

The emergence of a genuine Islamic movement and the steadfastness of its volunteers in an atmosphere not conducive to both are amazing feats. It is no exaggeration to describe steadfastness as a phenomenon where anti-Islamic thoughts mount pressure from every side, where hostility is intense, where missionary work is subjected to demoralising conditions, where the virtue of a volunteer is not even recognized and where his mistake or lapse is praised, where weakness is described as discretion, where retreat is commended. Anti-Islam forces propose to nip Islam in the bud but it is easier said than done. Movements cannot be crushed by force. The preferred strategy is to prevail upon the champions of Islam to liquidate Islam. No open request is made to this effect. They only urge the Muslims to relax their rigid conformity to Islam, and to concede that the views of other communities are valid, as others are willing to appreciate the virtues of Islam. In order to implement the policy of 'Live and let others live', mutual tolerance of

each other's viewpoint is necessary. This is a very delicate stage when Muslims may tend to become flexible and to revise their own ideas. If they take a step in this direction, it will be suicidal in effect both for the movement and for the volunteer force. When a man rolls down from the heights, he becomes unstoppable until he reaches the plains at the bottom. A little bending of the head before the force of circumstances becomes a total surrender in no time. Give one thing to your foe and be ready to give all.

The capacity to remain firm in the teeth of opposition from evil forces can be derived from remembrance of Allah and from Prayer. The Qur'an clearly states:

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَ مِنْ تَابٍ مَعَكَ وَ لَا تَطْغَوْا ۚ إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝ وَ لَا تَزْكُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَمِمَّا كَسَبُوا ۚ وَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ ۝ وَ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَ زُلْفَا مِنْ اللَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبُهَا السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَى لِلذَّكَرِينَ ۚ وَ أَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝

*"Therefore stand firm (in the straight path) as thou art commanded, - thou and those who with thee turn (unto Allah): and transgress not (from the Path): for He seeth well that ye do. And incline not to those who do wrong, or the Fire will touch you: and ye have no protectors other than Allah, nor shall ye be helped. And establish regular Prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approaches of the night: for those things that are good remove those that are evil: that is*

*a reminder for the mindful. And be steadfast in patience; for verily Allah will not suffer the reward of the righteous to perish."* (Qur'an 11:112-115)

Contiguous to the order to remain firm is the order to avoid any inclination towards the transgressors. And then there is the order to install prayer in different parts of the day and the night. It is to show that prayer is the means to develop steadfastness. Without prayer man's feet will be uprooted, he will be enfeebled and he lose the power of resistance, and finally the enemies will lure him into their camp.

### **(e) Authentic Exposition of Religion**

One of the compunctions of the call to faith is that religion should be presented in its authentic form and in its totality and without addition and abridgement. The capacity to do so can develop within you if you perform Prayers in the most proper way and without any deficiency. The Qur'an describes the worshippers thus:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

*"And who (strictly) guard their prayers."* (Qur'an 23:9)

If you observe every item of Prayers scrupulously and fulfil every demand of prayers, then you will be the guardians of Prayers in the truest sense of the term. Similarly you will be able to present Islam before the world in the manner prescribed for it.

A study of the Qur'an and Hadith makes it clear that

God has prioritized Prayers. In the same manner your life should give top priority to prayers too. God likes Prayers most; you too should like Prayers most. The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) observed, جعلت قرة عيني، "The coolness of my eyes is kept in Prayer." في الصلاة

(Sunan Nasai, Kitab Ashratun Nisa, chapter Hubbun Nisa, Musnade Ahmad, 3/128)

You too should get the coolness of your eyes through Prayers. You should experience bliss and serenity through Prayers. Every item of Prayers should give you pleasure and tranquillity. The Prayer which contains these characteristics ensures your success, fetches Allah's blessings, and enables you to carry on the auspicious duty of presenting Islam in the most trying of circumstances. At the same time if your Prayer is devoid of these characteristics, then you have been oblivious of God in spite of your Prayer. If you are oblivious of God, God is oblivious of you. Then it is not possible for you to discharge the onerous duty of calling people to Islam.



### **III E. Donations in Allah's Way<sup>1</sup>**

Affluence and luxurious lifestyle go hand in hand. For an affluent person self-gratification is the guiding principle. He constructs skyscrapers, subordinates other human beings, and vaunts his superior status in their midst. Islam orders him to set apart a portion of his wealth for the welfare of others. A slave of God has to spend his money in Allah's way. If he spends it in some other way, he becomes a transgressor.

#### **(i) Acknowledgment of Allah's favours**

Expenditure in Allah's way is a practical acknowledgment of having been favoured by God. Man has received innumerable favours from Him and this fact teaches him to extend the same kindness to other human beings. The most effective way of being kind is to extend financial aid. When a person spends his hard-earned money upon a person in need, he demonstrates his awareness of Allah's favours to himself and his own sense of gratitude. The differentiating line between a Momin and a Kafir is this: the former is a grateful slave

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(1) My book on this subject was published long ago. Excerpts from that book have been rearranged in this section.



of God and the latter is ingrate and has forgotten God. Allah says how a man has been remiss:

فَلَا أَمْتَمَّ الْعَقَبَةَ ۚ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْعَقَبَةُ ۚ فَكُ رَقَبَةً ۚ أَوْ إِطْعَمَ فِي  
يَوْمٍ مَسْجُوعٍ ۚ يَتِيمًا دَامِرًا ۚ أَوْ وَسْكَينًا دَامِرًا ۚ

*"But he hath made no haste on the path that is steep.  
And what will explain to thee the path that is steep?-(  
It is:) freeing the bondman; or the giving of food in a  
day of privation to the orphan with claims of  
relationship, or to the indigent (down) in the dust."*

(Qur'an 90:11-16)

## (ii) Giving - as an expression of one's fear of God

To render financial aid is to express one's fear of God. Allah says that by rendering help to others one can escape from punishment in the Hereafter. One who has fear of the Hereafter cannot but try to escape from the punishment by spending money. The Qur'an says that one who does not care for God and the Hereafter will be contemptuous towards the orphans and the indigent.

(Qur'an 107: 1-3)

The people whose hearts and minds are obsessed with the idea of the Hereafter and awe-struck by God cannot be expected to be hard-hearted. Their emotional state will be different.

وَيُطْعَمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِمْ ۖ وَسْكَينًا وَيَتِيمًا ۖ وَأَسِيرًا ۖ إِنَّمَا تُطْعَمُونَ لَوَجْهِهِ  
لَا تُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا ۖ إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبِّنَا يَوْمًا غُيُوبًا  
قَطَرِيرًا ۖ

*"And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, - (saying), 'We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks. We only fear a Day of frowning and distress from the side of our Lord.'"*

*(Qur'an 76: 8-10)*

### **(iii) Service to mankind through financial aid**

A rich man spends his money on himself, on kith and kin, on friends and sometimes on his community. Islam enlarges this area of sympathy and asks him to reach out to all human beings. It is the religious duty of a Muslim to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to render financial help to the indigent irrespective of his being related or unrelated, alien or acquainted, a native or a foreigner, a co-religionist or a follower of another religion. If a person is in a position to give financial aid to someone, then he has to give it. If he is not in a position to do so, he is absolved of this duty.

To spend in Allah's way is to invite Allah's mercy. A needy person provides you with an opportunity to fulfil his need and to deserve Allah's mercy. A Tradition asserts:

Allah is merciful towards the kind people. Show mercy to the people on earth, He who is in the Highest will show mercy to you.

(Jami Tirmithi, chapters on Birr and Silah, Babu ma faa fi rahmatul Muslimeen.)

In the Matter of spending, this comprehensive view is to be borne in mind. This is what faith warrants; this is what it naturally demands.

#### (iv) The Pairing of Praying and Spending

Prayer is a pillar of Islam. The Qur'an has paired it with Zakath or spending in Allah's way. In general, the two activities are mentioned side by side. The initial definition of the pious people provided in the Qur'an has this to say:

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

*"Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them."*

*(Qur'an 2:3)*

There are many such verses wherein the two are mentioned together. They are one in purpose and spirit. Islam wants its followers to establish Prayer and to spend their money in Allah's way as their success in this world and the next is based on them. Without them success is unthinkable.

#### (v) Tahajjud Prayer and Spending

Prayer during the small hours of the night is a special characteristic of the beloved slaves of Allah. The Qur'an refers to their habit of spending along with this Prayer. God's elect not only keep awake but also spend money on others if Allah has bestowed wealth upon them. They will

be rewarded in a manner beyond their imagination.

تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ۚ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ ۚ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

*"They forsake their beds of sleep, the while they call on their Lord, in fear and hope: and they spend (in Charity) out of the sustenance which We have bestowed on them. Now no person knows what delights of the eye are kept hidden (in reserve) for them - as a reward for their (good) deeds."*

(Qur'an 32:16, 17)

#### (vi) Prayer and Spending - Crucial to Islamic Law

Prayer and spending constitute the foundation for Islamic Law. A whole system comes into existence through them. Prayer strengthens man's relationship with Allah and trains him to be obedient to Allah. Zakath outwardly is financial aid but it inwardly strengthens the emotion to respect the human rights and to serve human beings in difficulties. Other values like service, beautiful conduct, sacrifice, sympathy, welfare of others are also nourished. The two areas - worship of and service to God, sincerity towards and wishing well of others - cover the entire gamut of Shariah. Strict adherence to its regulations enables one to implement the whole of religion.

That is why, in the list of the imperatives of faith and

belief, Prayer and Spending are prominent. They are given equal emphasis.

قُلْ لِعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَ يُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَ  
عَلَانِيَةً مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ ۝

*"Speak to my servants who have believed, that they may establish regular Prayers, and spend (in charity) out of the sustenance We have given them, secretly and openly, before the coming of a Day in which there will be neither mutual bargaining nor befriending."*

(Qur'an 14:31)

### (vii) Sacrifice of Life and Property and Promise of Paradise

A trader resorts to trade, a merchant stores goods, a capitalist runs factories and manufacturing units, a labourer offers the sweat of his brow - only to earn and amass wealth. If these endeavours are legitimate, Islam does not forbid them. Islam maintains that if man sells hard-earned capital to God, in return he will get Paradise - a place free from sorrows, a place abounding in perennial joy, a place for true luxury. A person who hands over his life and property to God in lieu of Paradise is a Momin. Allah promises him Paradise as a compensation for his sacrifice.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنَّهُمْ لَتَمَّ الْجَنَّةُ

*"Allah hath purchased of the Believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the Garden (of Paradise),"*

(Qur'an 9:111)

What greater success can there be when man sacrifices his humble and temporary life and spends his money which is not durable in the way of Allah and becomes eligible to secure everlasting pleasures of Paradise!

### (viii) Exhortation for Spending

In the Qur'an and the Traditions, repeated exhortation is there to pay Zakath and to spend money for good causes, and there are references to the excellence of such acts and to the rewards for them.

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَ اقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا  
لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا  
اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

*"And establish regular Prayer and give Zakat; and loan to Allah a beautiful loan. And whatever good ye send forth for yourselves, ye shall find it with Allah yea, better and greater in reward, and seek ye the grace of Allah: for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

(Qur'an 73:20)

Both Prayer and Zakath should be acted upon and money should be voluntarily spent on righteous deeds. Money spent thus is better than money saved and left behind because infinite reward awaits that person who spends money in Allah's way.

### (ix) Spending is a good bargain

Spending in the way of Allah is such a profitable

bargain that it is not easy to envision how profitable it is. It is like sowing one seed and reaping seven hundred.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَتَتْ سَنَةً سَابِقَ  
فِي كُلِّ سَنَةٍ وَمَا هِيَ بِظَوَّافٍ إِلَّا لَمْ يَأْكُلِ اللَّهُ وَاسِعَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ۝

*"The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it groweth seven ears, and each ear hath a hundred grains. Allah giveth manifold increase to whom He pleaseth: and Allah careth for all and He knoweth all things."*

(Qur'an 2:261)

Man is naive to think that he sustains loss when he spends money in Allah's way. Actually it is out and out a profitable gargain. He will get a handsome reward tomorrow for what he spends today. One paisa spent today will fetch ten paise and even seven-hundred paise tomorrow. Not only that. Allah gives manifold increase. The sense of vastness implies that He can give rewards more than seven hundred - fold. There is no scarcity of anything that God has. One has to pause and think. Allah gives a reward and there is increase in the reward. Are there words to describe that reward and that increase? Isn't that person's good luck enviable who is eligible to receive a huge reward from Allah?

Hazrat Abu Tharr (Allah be pleased with him) asked the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him), "What is the reward of Sadaqa (charity)?" He replied, "اضعاف مضاعفة و عند الله المزيد" The reward will be

increased several fold and Allah has much more to give." (Musnad Ahmed: 5/265)

Fortunate are those souls who spend money generously in Allah's way because they will get it back with a huge increase. They will get it back at a time when their hands will be empty and when they will be in dire need of capital.

#### (x) Spending increases the Capital

The general principle is that there is deficiency in proportion to what is spent. The glorious exception is the matter of spending in Allah's way. Here spending increases the quantity as well as the blessings. Allah gives a better return to what is given in His way.

قُلْ إِنْ رَبِّي يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرْهُ لَمْ يَأْتِ بِشَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْخَالِقِينَ ۝

*"Say: Verily my Lord enlarges and restricts the sustenance to such of His servants as He pleases: and nothing do ye spend in the least (in His cause) but He replaces it: for He is the best of those who grant sustenance."*

(Qur'an 34:39)

In a Tradition attributed to Hazrat Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him), the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said, "There will be no reduction in assets through acts of charity and donation; Allah increases the status of a person who ever forgives and ignores the wrong done to him; Allah exalts



the person who is humble and gentle."

(Sahih Muslim, kittabul Birr wa Salah, chapter on forgiveness and gentleness.)

### (xi) Miserliness is condemned

The world thinks that riches bring respect. Without riches, one is degraded. Status, respect, honour all these go to an affluent person irrespective of his being obedient or disobedient to God. The world is unaware of that honour and shame which will be fixed and finalised on the Day of Judgment when all those rich people who forgot God in this world will be disgraced. The money collected and heaped here will be of no avail there. Only that money spent in Allah's way will be valued. The Qur'an says:

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ مُتَكَبِّرٍ لَّمْ يُزَكِّهِ الْإِزْيَ جَمْعٌ مَّالًا وَ عَدَدَةٌ يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ  
أَحْلَدَهُ ۖ كَلَّا لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ۖ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ۖ نَارُ اللَّهِ  
الْمُوقَدَةُ ۖ الَّتِي تَكَلِّمُ عَلَى الْأُفُقِ ۖ إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّوَصَّدَةٌ ۖ فِي عَذَابٍ  
مُسَدَّدَةٍ ۖ

*"Woe to every (kind of) scandal-monger and backbiter, who pileth up wealth and layeth it by, thinking that his wealth would make him last for ever! By no means! He will be sure to be thrown into that which breaks to pieces. And what will explain to thee that which breaks to pieces? (It is) the Fire of Allah kindled (to a blaze), the which doth mount (right) to the hearts: it shall be made into a vault over them, in columns outstretched."*

(Qur'an 104:1-9)

## (xii) The Evil Consequence of Miserliness

Man guards wealth like a serpent and treats it as a durable support that will come in handy on a rainy day. But on the Day of Judgment when support would be most direly needed, storing of wealth would not be a safe capital but become a source of punishment.

وَالَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَتَّقُونَ اللَّهَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ قُيُومًا  
يُجْزَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خُمُسُ مِمَّا جَاءَهُمْ وَ  
جُزْءُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٣٤

*"And there are those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah: announce unto them a most grievous chastisement - on the Day when it will be heated in the fire of hell, and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, 'This is the (treasure) which ye hoarded for yourselves: taste ye, then the (treasures) ye hoarded.'"*

(Qur'an 9:34, 35)

One Tradition attributed to Hazrat Abu Huraira explains this verse. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said, "One who hoards gold and silver and does not fulfil their rights (will be treated in the following manner). On the Day of Judgment, tablets of gold and silver will be made and heated in the furnace of hell and then they will be used to brand the hands, the forehead, and the back of the hoarder. When the tablets begin to lose their heat, they will be again heated up and used for renewed branding. (This will be a prolonged

affair)."(Sahih Muslim, Kitabuz Zakat, bab Ism mane al-zakat)

Success awaits that fortunate person who spends God-given money in God's way. Woe unto the unfortunate people who deny themselves success through excessive love for money.

### **(xiii) Missionary work and spending**

Spending in the way of Allah provides a firm foundation to faith, which cannot be conceived without it. It holds great significance for the missionary work and its success. Light is being thrown on some special features.

#### **(a) Service to mankind and their welfare**

Call to faith is nothing but a demonstration of one's interest in the welfare of mankind. The demand of this welfare is that every individual should be helped who deserves to be and can be helped. Call to faith is in reality an attempt to save men from punishment in the Hereafter. A person who takes up this noble task as his vocation is indeed a very great well-wisher of mankind. If he is sincere in his vocation, then he will be their natural sympathiser in this world and will render help to them when they are suffering. A man who is eager to save them from chastisement in the remote future cannot possibly be indifferent to their present difficulties and to the need to save them from such difficulties. If a

preacher's kindness is not stirred on seeing the distressing conditions of the people, then it means he is not sincerely committed to his vocation. If he presents himself as a well-wisher before the people, he will be discharging his duty and his words will have irresistible attraction. People will lend their ears to him and be inclined towards him. Likewise through generous spending he will be discharging his duty and paving the way for the spread of his mission.

### **(b) Sympathy towards the ideological comrades**

The preacher has to take care of other volunteers who have come under one organization to call people to faith. Some of these volunteers may be living below poverty line, some very weak and without any patron, and some may stand in need of resources. To strengthen the organization, the rich members should extend cooperation to those who need it and who are not in a position to keep pace with the organization on account of their economic disadvantage. The rich members endowed with vast resources should not forget that they are related to an organization serving Islam. All members should have the same love and affection among them as could be found between brothers. Like members of a family, the members of the organization should share each other's sorrow. A person who lives as though he has no consideration for the hardships and comforts of

co-members is devoid of team spirit.

### **(c) Co-operation of the Preachers**

With regard to the preachers, who are full time workers, the rich members must take care of their needs and allow them to concentrate on their work without distraction. They should not worry about livelihood and they should not be obliged to beg by surrendering their self-respect. When war is raging, soldiers participate in it. More than these soldiers, there are paramilitary personnel whose moral support will be a shot in the arm and the soldiers advance with greater enthusiasm, ensuring victory thereby. In the Traditions, it is stated that in the matter of reward, both the active participants in the Jihad in Allah's way and their supporters will be treated equally.

A Tradition attributed to Hazrat Zaid bin Khalid (Allah be pleased with him) records a statement of the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him): "He who provides a fighter in the way of Allah with military equipment is a fighter too. He who takes care of a soldier's family in his absence and meets their needs/expenses is a fighter too in the way of Allah."

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Jihad wa siyar, chapter Fazal min Jahaz Ghazia or Khalfa bikhair, Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Jihad)

Jihad has a wider connotation inclusive of the propagation of faith. The propagation gets top priority

because it opens the way to the triumph of Islam. The preachers are engaged in a very significant enterprise. Their supporters are to all intents and purposes engaged too. They are not in the vanguard but they lend their support and assistance to those who are in the vanguard. It is hoped that they would be included when Allah distributes rewards.

#### **(d) Financial Aid to the Missionary Work**

Means and resources are necessary to realize an objective. A missionary requires them too for the success of his missionary work. Money is one such resource or resource of resources. When the propagation of Islam requires resources and, in spite of possessing them, if you don't provide them, you are stultifying your faith and belief. If the material resources needed for the preaching and the triumph of Islam are not more available to the party and organization set up for the purpose, then there would be a steady depletion of the strength and energy of the party and the rival organizations would register an upward growth by making use of the resources available to them. Such depletion brings about the loss of a party and not just of an individual. The whole scenario can be seen from another angle. The task of preaching is the responsibility of a whole community. If it is not discharged, the whole community would be taken to task and it would be akin to courting disaster. The Qur'an says

in this context.

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾

*"And spend of your substance in the cause of Allah and make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction, but do good; for Allah loveth those who do good."*  
(Qur'an 2:195)

From the materialistic point of view, the world has made much progress. To disseminate any ideology and make it dominant, the world has vast and powerful resources which it did not have earlier. These resources ought to have been used for the preaching and supremacy of the religion of Allah but, unfortunately, they are being utilised to spread non-belief, atheism, evil and to eliminate goodness. No servant of Islam is empowered to reverse this trend; he can only dedicate the resources at his disposal to the propagation of Islam. Naturally his resources will be minimal but, if Allah wills, in spite of these limited resources, Allah's religion will prevail, and untrue forces fail in spite of vast resources.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَسَيُفْقَرُونَهَا  
فَهُمْ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً هُمْ يُعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

*"The unbelievers spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the path of Allah, and so will they continue to spend; but in the end they will have (only) regrets and sighs; at length they will be overcome."* (Qur'an 8:36)

Those who deny or rebel against Allah spend a great deal for hogging the limelight, for securing praise and recognition, or for blowing one's own trumpet but this spending will yield nothing like a blighted farmland. Their wrong actions will ruin them and they will not realize their objective.

مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُونَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيحٍ فِيهَا صِرٌّ أَصَابَتْ حَرْثَ  
قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَأَهْلَكَتُهُ ۖ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ۝

*"What they spend in the life of this (material) world may be likened to a wind which brings a nipping frost: it strikes and destroys the harvest of men who have wronged their own souls: it is not Allah that hath wronged them, but they wrong themselves."*

(Qur'an 3:117)

#### **(e) The Unique Value of Spending in dire need**

Allah's religion is passing through a critical phase. Its hold upon its followers has slackened. Misleading movements and perverted viewpoints have spread their tentacles everywhere. Boredom with God and indifference to the Hereafter rule the roost. The followers of Islam have no space for Islam in their own lives. In these circumstances, if someone strengthens the cause of Islam through his money, his act carries considerable value. Even in ordinary circumstances, great reward awaits a person who renders financial assistance to Islam. But a greater reward the helper deserves who responds



when Islam is oppressed and calls out for help. The Qur'an is explicit that the people who spent money on Islam before the conquest of Makkah and the people who did so after the conquest of Makkah cannot be equal. The first group rendered help to the cause of Islam when it was direly needed; the second group offered cooperation when the flag of the Islamic state was flying high over the whole of Hejaz. It is stated:

لَا يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَتْلٍ أُولَٰئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً  
مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ بَعْدُ وَقَاتَلُوا وَلَا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْعُسْطٰى وَاللَّهُ بِهَا  
تَعْمَلُونَ خَيْرٌ

*"Not equal among you are those who spent (freely) and fought, before the Victory, (with those who did so later). Those are higher in rank than those who spent (freely) and fought afterwards. But to all has Allah promised a goodly (reward). And Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do."* (Qur'an 57:10)

Addressing a gathering of distinguished people who professed Islam and made sacrifices after the conquest of Makkah, the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said, "Make no improper observation upon my Companions (the converts to Islam before the conquest of Makkah). If you spend a heap of gold (similar in size to the mountain of Uhad), it will not match in value with a very small quantity (one or half Mudd) that they had spent."

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitab As-habun Nabi Sahih Muslim, kitab Fada'il Sahaba, chapter on Tahreem Sabbe Sahaba.)

### **(f) Prudent Spending is ordered**

Nowhere in the Qur'an and the Traditions is it stated that it is a sin to earn and keep wealth, nor is it stated that man should spend his entire wealth in Allah's way. Only a part of one's wealth is to be spent. This virtue of Muslims is reiterated.

وَمَا رَأَيْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

*"And spend out of what We have provided for them."*

*(Qur'an 2:3)*

In this Zakath has the pride of place. Then the same applies to mandatory sadaqah. If the law of Shariath so ordains, payment of sadaqah becomes compulsory. Feeding wife, children and other dependants is also included. It is essential that their material needs are met and monetary rights are protected.

### **(g) They spend generously in Allah's way**

When man spends his wealth under the orders of God on those items which are compulsory, then the desire is born in him to spend his money on items not compulsory. He is not content to discharge compulsory duties; he is eager to secure greater blessedness by discharging voluntary and ancillary duties also. He does not waste any opportunity to render monetary help; he is found ever ready to seize every opportunity for the purpose, when the religion of God urges him to spend. In this way, by giving a little of his wealth, he proclaims that all his

assets belong to God and whenever God's religion demands he will be ready to spend his wealth in its entirety. When this feeling emerges in him, it will not be impossible for him to give away his all and return home empty-handed. History abounds in such examples.

Hazrat Umar (Allah be pleased with him) narrates that for the military expedition to Tabuk, the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) sought cooperation to raise funds. At that time Hazrat Umar had enough and to spare. He thought that here was a chance for him to go one better than Hazrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) and so he took one-half of his property and gave it to the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) who asked him what he had spared for his family. Hazrat Umar replied that he had left at home the same quantity for his family. Hazrat Abu Bakr also brought his contribution to the war preparations. His contribution was the whole of his property. When the Prophet asked him too what he had spared for his family, he replied that for his family Allah and His Prophet were sufficient. Then Hazrat Umar realized that it was not possible for him to excel Hazrat Abu Bakr in righteous deeds.

(Sunan Abu Dawood Kitabuz Zakat, chapter on Rukhsat fi Zalike;  
Jami Tirmithi, kitabul Manaqib)

When the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) was engaged in the fund-raising campaign for the same military expedition to Tabuk, Hazrat

Uthman volunteered to contribute one hundred camels equipped with all the necessary paraphernalia. The Messenger continued his exhortation, and so Hazrat Uthman increased his offer to two hundred camels. The Messenger persisted with his exhortation and then Hazrat Uthman raised the offer to three hundred camels. The narrator of this Tradition, Hazrat Abdul Rahman bin Khubbab, saw that the Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) descended from the pulpit and heard him say that after such an offer Hazrat Uthman had attained immunity from any reproach or loss or punishment. (That is in lieu of this yeoman service, Allah would spare him even if there was any inadvertent lapse on his part.)

(Jami Tirmithi, Abwabul Manaqib, chapter Manaqib of  
Uthman bin Affan)

Abdur Rahman bin Abu Samrah narrates another anecdote pertaining to the same expedition. Hazrat Uthman brought one thousand dinars in his sleeve and offered them to the Prophet. The narrator saw the Prophet turning the coins upside down and asserting repeatedly, "Whatever Uthman may do in future, he would remain above blame and exempt from reparation."

(Jami Tirmithi, *ibid*, Musnade Ahmed, 5/63)



### **III F. Sacrifice**

**(i) Benefactors of mankind are inclined towards sacrifice:**

The benefactors of mankind, to whatever field they may belong, are human beings only. They have the same emotions, the same feelings, the same desires as we have. They love life and property too. They are still considered one notch above others because in order to enrich the lives of others they continuously impoverish themselves. They sacrifice their emotions and feelings and resort to self-abnegation so that others may enjoy life. They bare their bosoms to the arrows of oppression and bear all atrocities happily in the hope that there should be no atrocity left to be practised on others. They go without food and get enfeebled as they do not want others to become victims of famine.

**(ii) The task of inviting people to Islam attracts sacrifice:**

When we propose to spread the message of Islam, we propose to do the greatest favour to mankind. We can discharge this great duty when the passion for the work consumes us fully and when we renounce what we

own-our rest and comfort, our time, the moments of our living, our money and our wealth: Without such renunciation, justice was not rendered to the task in the past nor can it be rendered in the present.

**(iii) The task of invitation should continue against odds**

The fact, reiteratively presented to you, is that the propagation of Islam, the religion which you have accepted knowing it to be true, is a compulsory duty. You have to convey it to others at any rate. Nothing should be an impediment in declaring what you hold to be true. Otherwise you are exposing your cowardice and doing gross injustice to truth. If you are a missionary then it is in that capacity you have to live all through. As long as there are men and women to listen to you, you will continue to invite them to lead a God-oriented life even if, in the process, everything of yours is snatched away and you are victimised until the relationship between the body and the soul is snapped and this snapping is unbearable to all. Even if, God forbid, the time comes when you are deprived of freedom, to which you have a natural and legal right, and you are deprived of the freedom to speak the truth, and the walls of the prison rise between you and other human beings, you have the example of Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him). In his case four walls did not the prison make, with

regard to the task of preaching. You have to follow in his footsteps. Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him) was deprived of his freedom and put behind the bars. Even the prison walls echoed with the message of truth. When his voice did not reach the free individuals, he started preaching the message to the prisoners.

يٰصَاحِبِ السِّجْنِ ءَاَرْبَابٌ مُّتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيْرٌ اَمِ اللّٰهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ۭ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ اِلَّا اَسْمَاءٌ سَمِيْعُوهَا اَنْتُمْ وَاٰبَاؤُكُمْ مَّا اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطٰنٍ ۚ اِنِ الْحُكْمُ اِلَّا لِلّٰهِ ۚ اَمَرَ اَلَّا تَعْبُدُوْا اِلَّا اِيَّاهُ ۚ ذٰلِكَ الْرِسْوٰنُ الْاَقِيْمُ وَلٰكِنْ اَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝

*"O my two companions of the prison! (I ask you): Are many lords differing among themselves better, or Allah the One, Supreme and Irresistible? Whatever ye worship apart from Him is nothing but names which ye have named, ye and your fathers, - for which Allah hath sent down no authority: the command is for none but Allah: He hath commanded that ye worship none but Him: that is the right religion, but most men understand not."*

*(Qur'an 12: 39,40)*

#### (iv) Sacrifice is the key to the Triumph of Faith

You have a great ideal before you; you want to see the rule of God on this earth. This ideal can be realized when you are prepared to invest your life's capital in it and to give up all engagements that inhibit the realization of this ideal. The day when your sacrifices reach the point of climax will be the day when the signs of the victory of truth will start emerging. When the temperature shoots up beyond a limit and the earth feels



its impact, there fall pleasant showers. It is darkest before dawn. If the conditions are formidable, there is no need to panic or feel frustrated. The formidable conditions presage a revolution and a radical change in trends. It has happened several times when the voice of truth was raised, and fighting against odds, it drove home to victory. It will happen even today. Storms of opposition rose and raged but could not suppress the voice of truth. Isn't it a fact that Prophet Joseph was taken from the dark cell of a prison to the shining seat of authority? Isn't it a fact that the community of Prophet Moses inherited the holy land after passing through a phase of weakness and helplessness? Isn't it a fact that the oppression of truth obliged Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) to leave Makkah and yet within ten years he returned to Makkah with the anthem of the victorious truth on his lips.

لا اله الا الله وحده انجز وعده ونصر عبده وهزم الاحزاب وحده

*There is no God other than the One God, He kept His promise, and He helped His slave and He alone defeated the evil troops." (Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Haj, bab Hajjatun nabi s.a.w.)*

These are the landmarks of the history of Truth. If you have the determination to take on hostile factors surrounding you, history will repeat itself. Victory is a foregone conclusion for the struggle waged by men of perseverance. If you have decided to live and die for truth

and to sacrifice everything for it, then that day is not far off when you will see on earth that spectacular scene which your eyes are eager to behold.

وَأُخْرَىٰ تُجِئُونَهَا لِيُفْرَقَ بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَكَرِيمِهِ ۖ وَبَشِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

*"And another (favour will He bestow), which ye do love, - help from Allah and a speedy victory. So give the glad tidings to the believers."* (Qur'an 61:13)

#### (v) Say not, the struggle naught availath

This fact should not be overlooked that actions count in this world and they bear fruit. No pains, no gains. If you become inactive and do not use limbs, it would be as though you have shut the door of consequences. Say not the struggle naught availeth. The triumph of truth without a struggle is a myth. When your struggle fulfils all conditions in the way of truth, the consequences will unfold themselves according to God's statute. There are some errands whose consequences are quick to emerge and there are other errands the appearance of whose consequences takes a long time. To execute such errands one's courage must be very high. There should be no haste. He should be forbearing and patient. When you begin your mission of truth, you sow the seed of its victory at the same time. Manure it with blood, sweat, and tears. The seed will certainly not go to seed. Sooner or later it will sprout to bear fruit and you will not go without its reward.

فَلْيَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ وَمَنْ  
يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

*"Let those fight in the cause of Allah who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter. To him who fighteth in the cause of Allah, - whether he is slain or gets victory - soon shall We give him a reward of great (value)"*

(Qur'an 4:74)

Though the above extract deals with Jihad, its application to the propagation of faith and its victory is not irrelevant because this is also a kind of Jihad.

#### **(vi) Islam stands in dire need of scrifice today**

Today Islam is under terrible oppression. It needs your help, your professional skills, your time and money, your sleep, your comfort, your rest. The day we decide to minister to these needs of Islam will be a day of great blessing. Time is fleeting and death is in hot pursuit of every individual. It is not known, when the sun rises tomorrow, who amongst us will survive to speak and listen before it sets. Fortunate is he who does not waste his today while waiting for tomorrow. Awake and arise in support of Islam before death snatches from you the right to decide.

### **III G. Purity: the Soul of Religion**

The soul of religion is purity. If a thing is purged of dirt, dust, impurities, it gets back its pristine purity. In the same manner, if religion gets rid of the impurities like untrue reflections and thoughts and wrong urges and motives, it becomes pure. Otherwise, on more occasions than one, its identity and form get distorted and it perforce loses its real spirit. In the word 'Ikhlas', concept of selection and liking is embedded. A sincere (Mukhlis) devotee of Allah is one whose thoughts and actions are totally controlled by His instructions and who seeks Allah's liking and pleasure and he has no other motive. A picked (Mukhlis) devotee of Allah is God's elect, one who is purified of all impurities - intellectual as well as practical, and one is considered eligible for all favours. From this point of view, prophets are declared 'Mukhlaseen' in the holy Qur'an.

#### **(i) Purity of Belief**

Purity applies to both belief and action. Monotheism is purity of belief. Man has to believe that God is one and that He is without a partner or associate in His person, His Attributes, and His Actions. The basic doctrine of the Qur'an is monotheism. On this axis do all the Qur'anic

teachings revolve. The Qur'an has presented such a clear and unambiguous concept of monotheism that any possibility for the plurality of gods is totally ruled out. The Qur'an reiterates with such clarity and force.

وَالَهُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٣﴾

*"And your God is one God: there is no (other) God but He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful."* (Qur'an 2:163)

The greatest verse of the Qur'an (Ayat-ul- Kursi) begins thus:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ أَلَمْ يَلَمْ ۚ أَلَمْ يَلَمْ ۚ ...

*"Allah! There is no (other) but He, -the Living, the Self-subsisting. Supporter of all."* (Qur'an 2:255)

The entire cosmos bears testimony to the oneness of God. The angels running the system of the cosmos and men of discernment bear testimony too.

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٨﴾

*"There is no (other) God but He: that is the witness of Allah, His angels, and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice. There is no (other) God but He the exalted in power, the wise."* (Qur'an 3:18)

There is a proclamation of monotheism and there is a refutation of the plurality of gods in the Qur'anic chapter (112) entitled 'Ikhlas'. It is asserted that Allah is the Most High and devoid of any need, that all depend on Him, and that He is the contripetal force for all, that He does

not own a family boasting of a lineage of goods, and that from beginning to end He remains second to none and unique, and He has no counterpart or peer.

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ  
كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

*"Say: He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him."* (Qur'an 112)

All the excellent, auspicious, and perfect qualities imaginable are found in the person of Allah. All beautiful names are His as they indicate His attributes. Every name of His points to some beautiful attribute.

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ

*"Allah! There is no (other) God but He! To Him belong the most beautiful names."* (Qur'an 20:8)

It is stated in another place:

قُلْ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ

*"Say: call upon Allah or call upon Ar.Rahman: by whatever name ye call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the most beautiful names."* (Qur'an 17:110)

The identity of Allah is free from every defect and shortcoming. The shortcomings and weaknesses inherent in creatures are not found in Him. Worshippers of several gods and goddesses think that God is anthropomorphic whereas Allah is highly pure and supreme and free from human weaknesses.

سُبْحَنَ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

*"Glory to the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne, He is free from the things they attribute (to Him)!"* (Qur'an 43:82)

It is said in another place:

سُبْحَنَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨٢﴾ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٨٤﴾

*"Glory to the Lord, the Lord of Honour and Power! (He is free) from what they ascribe (to Him)! And peace on the messengers! And praise to Allah, the Lord and Cherisher of the worlds!"* (Qur'an 37:180-182)

The truth is that the concept of monotheism given through the prophets is valid and reliable and shows the way to security and salvation. There is no way to get salvation if one subscribes to the concept of the plurality of gods.

The natural corollary of the belief in the oneness of God is that one must accept in all sincerity that Allah is without a beginning and an end, the ageless and beyond ageing, ever-living, ever-supporting. He created the earth, the sky and the cosmos and so owns them all. Everything here is His property. He is the policy-maker and Administrator of the entire universe. He is the Lord of the worlds and Nourisher of all His creation. He provides for all, ministers to their needs, solves their problems. He is the Owner of death and life. He knows everything,

aware of everything, knows the visible and the invisible, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. He can help and He can harm. When He wants to benefit someone, nobody can harm him. When He wants to harm someone, no one can help him. His powers are infinite. What He decrees occurs in the twinkling of an eye. His angels are present everywhere in the universe and execute His orders without any questioning. He is the Law-maker. He is the True Sovereign and Absolute Ruler. To guide mankind He sent messengers and Scriptures and commandments. Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) is the last messenger of Allah and the holy Qur'an is His last Scripture. This book contains guidance for the whole human species for all ages to come. He is the Judge, the Arbitrator, the Ombudsman. At His Command, the Day of Judgment will emerge when every man will get eternal reward or punishment in accordance with his activities.

One has to believe in all such attributes of Allah, mentioned in the Qur'an, and to believe also that there is no other being endowed with such attributes after believing in the One God. He has no partner in Person and attributes. When a man accepts this, his faith will become pure.

## **(ii) Purity of Action**

The same purity is necessary in acts of worship. Any addition of other gods is unacceptable in Islam. The order



is explicit:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ ۚ

*"Verily it is We who have revealed the Book to thee in truth: so serve Allah, offering Him sincere devotion."*

(Qur'an 39:2)

In the same chapter, the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) is instructed to make the following proclamation:

قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ ۚ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَنْ أَكُونَ  
أَوَّلَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ۚ قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَأْيَ عَذَابٍ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ۚ قُلْ  
اللَّهُ أَعْبُدْ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ دِينِي ۚ

*"Say: Verily I am commanded to serve Allah with sincere devotion; and I am commanded to be the first of those who submit to Allah in Islam. Say: I would, if I disobeyed my Lord, indeed have fear of the chastisement of a mighty Day. Say: it is Allah I serve, with my sincere (and exclusive) devotion."*

(Qur'an 39: 11-14)

These verses ordain that Allah must be worshipped and served, the heart and mind should be focused on His greatness, supremacy and godhead, that one must be humility incarnate before Him, that all rituals like Prayer, prostration, sacrifice, supplication, glorification should be dedicated to Him. There is another order that loyalty should be offered to Him, His orders should be obeyed, His revealed legislation should be honoured. He is the Master and we are His servants; this relationship should

be observed. This is called 'Deen'. Purity of devotion should be offered to Him. There should be no "Shirk" or adulteration of this purity. No non-God can be given parity with Him. The Qur'an asks us not only to worship Allah but also to keep away from anything that detracts from the pure worship of God:

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا

*"Serve Allah and join not any partners with Him."*

(Qur'an 4:36)

Islam insists that Allah alone should be worshipped and that no small or great object of this universe should be set up as a partner with Allah. If a partner is set up, then worship would not be exclusive for Allah alone. The direct and essential demand of monotheism that worship and service are the prerogatives of God and there is absolutely no share in this for anyone else.

...أَتُنَادُوا إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا  
وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ۝

*"Your God is one God: Whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner."* (Qur'an 18:110)

Islam does not tolerate even a shadow of polytheism to be cast upon belief and act of worship. He who lets go the hold on monotheism and gets devoted to the plurality of gods has chosen the road to hell and denies himself God's forgiveness for ever.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَ يَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ۝

*"Allah forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgiveth anything else to whom He pleaseth; to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed."* (Qur'an 4:48)

### (iii) Negation of the Purity of Motive

The negation of purity (Ikhlāas) is Riya or playing to the gallery. 'Riya' stands for showmanship, attracting public notice, dissimulation. Where there is this desire to impress others, there cannot be sincerity. Where sincere devotion to God dictates an act, there cannot be artificiality. Sincerity and insincerity cannot co-exist. The intention to impress others robs good deeds of their genuine beauty. God has placed man in this vast universe not just to see how he behaves but also to see how beautifully he behaves:

لِيَمْلِكُمْ أَتْيَكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

*"That He might try you, which of you is best in conduct."* (Qur'an 11:7)

The beauty of behaviour is attainable if two conditions are fulfilled. One, behaviour should conform fully to the instructions given by God and His Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him). Two, behaviour should reflect purity of motive. It should seek only

Allah's pleasure and approval. There should be no other motive. In other words, it is not enough for an act to be legally sanctioned and correct; its motivating factor also has to be right. The compensation for beautiful conduct will never be wasted. Allah will pay the reward in full.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا  
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ  
ذَهَبٍ وَ يَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُدُوسٍ وَ اسْتَمْرَقَ مُقْعَدَاتٍ فِيهَا عَلَى  
الْأَرَآئِكِ نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَ حَسْبَتْ مُرْتَقَقَاتٍ

*"As to those who believe and work righteousness, verily We shall not suffer to perish the reward of any who do a (single) righteous deed. For them will be gardens of eternity; beneath them rivers will flow; they will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade; they will recline therein on raised thrones. How good the recompense! How beautiful a couch to recline on!"*  
(Qur'an 18:30, 31)

It is on the basis of the motive or intention that one can determine whether a certain act was God-oriented or a publicity stunt. It is on that basis alone the durbar of God would accept or reject that act. A famous tradition narrated by Hazrat Umar (Allah be pleased with him) has this to say:

سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول إنما الأعمال بالنيات وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى فمن كانت هجرته الى الله ورسوله فهجرته الى الله ورسوله ومن كانت هجرته الى دنيا

يُصِيهَا أَوْ إِلَى امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا فَهَجَرْتَهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ .

*"I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) say that actions are based upon motives. Everyone will get what he aspired for. If a person's migration was for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, then his migration was in fact towards Allah and His Messenger. If a person's migration was for the sake of securing this world or marrying a woman then that migration would be for the purpose for which it was undertaken." (There would be no recompense for it.)*

*(Bukhari, Kitabul Iman, chapter on motion and action)*

The Tradition explains that actions would be evaluated in relation to the motives behind them. If the action was motivated by a desire to please God, then the doer will deserve reward and honours. If some worldly motive was the cause for the action; then expecting reward for it is useless. Leaving hearth and home and facing an uncertain future in a strange land is a hallowed, sublime and superior act of renunciation. Even for that act, purity of motive is a condition. If this act of migration is for the sake of God, unlimited reward is in store. If it is for earning a livelihood or satisfying sexual urge, the migrating person may succeed in fulfilling his purpose but on the Day of Judgment he will have to forgo the honours reserved for acts dedicated exclusively to God. People of faith may perform righteous deeds with extremely pure motives and yet they continue to worry

whether there is some defect in the purity of their motive and whether the acceptability of their deeds would be adversely affected as a result. The emotional state caused by this worry is described thus:

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوْا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجَلَةٌ أُنْتُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ لَرَجِعُونَ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ ۝

*"And those who dispense their charity with their hearts full of fear, because they will return to their Lord; - It is these who hasten in every good work, and these who are foremost in them."* (Qur'an 23:60,61)

Hazrat Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her) asked the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) whether in the verses quoted above there is a reference to wicked people like the drunkards and the thieves. He replied;

لا يابنت الصديق لكنهم الذين يصومون ويصلون ويتصدقون  
وهم يخافون ان لا تقبل منهم اولئك الذين...

*"No, O Daughter of Siddique, it is not so. Actually, the reference is to those who fast, who pray, and who distribute charity and yet they worry about the acceptability of their righteous deeds. About them it is said that they race for the good things and they shall win them in the race."*

(Tirmithi, chapter on Tafseer, Surah Al-Mominoon)

Any activity, purged of all impurity and devoted exclusively to God, is liked by God whether it is charity or prayer or bravery in an armed conflict. Hazrat Abu

Tharr (Allah be pleased with him) quotes what Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) said:

ثلاثة يحبهم الله وثلاثة يبغضهم الله فاما الذين يحبهم الله فرجل اتى قوما فسألهم بالله ولم يسألهم بالله ولم يسألهم لقراة بينه وبينهم، فمنعوه فتخلف رجل باعينهم فاعطاه سرا لا يعلم بعطيته الا الله والذى اعطاه وقوم ساروا ليلتهم حتى اذا كان النوم احب الهيم مما يعدل به فوضعوا رؤسهم فقام يتملقى ويتلو اياتى ورجل كان فى سرية فلقى العدو فهزموا فاقبل بصدرة حتى يقتل او يفتح له والثلاثة الذين يبغضهم الله الشيخ الزانى والفقير المختال والغنى الظلوم.

*"Allah likes three types of people and dislikes three other types. (Parable of the first type liked by God): A certain person approached a group seeking help in Allah's name, not on the basis of kinship, still the group refused to oblige him. On seeing this reaction, a person liked by God came forward and silently gave him what he wanted. The donation was known to God and the donee and not to others. (Parable of the second type liked by God): A military unit trudged its way during the night. Exhaustion overcame it and sleep became the most desired object among all things of equal value. As a result, members of the unit lay down to sleep except one. He started praying and whispering to Me and reciting My verses. (Parable of the third type liked by God): There was a military unit. It was engaged in an armed conflict with the enemy. The military unit was defeated but there was a member in it (who was liked by God). The member (did not take*

*to his heels) but pushed his chest forward and stepped out with firm steps to fight to the finish or to win a victory.*

*The three types of people Allah dislikes are: an old adulterer, an arrogant mendicant, a wealthy but cruel person.*

(Musnad Ahmed 5/152; Tirmithi, chapters on seffatul Jannah; Nasai, kitabuz Zakath chapter on merit of giving)

#### **(iv) Showy Religiosity is a kind of sin**

'Riya' or showy religiosity is likened to a major sin like 'Shirk' or associating partners with God. It is because there is not one motive of pleasing God; instead, many motives are included. The purity demanded by monotheism is ignored here.

Hazrat Shaddad bin Aus (Allah be pleased with him) asked certain Companions (Allah be pleased with them),

لو رأيتم رجلا يصلى لرجل او يصوم له او يتصدق له اترون انه  
قد اشرك؟

*"If you see someone praying, fasting, or giving alms for the sake of some human being is he not guilty of treating that human being as God?"*

The Companions replied unanimously,

نعم والله انه من صلى للرجل او صام له او تصدق له لقد اشرك

*"By God, if he prays or fasts or gives alms for the sake of someone (Zaid or Bakr), he is guilty of treating non-God as God."*

Then Hazrat Shaddad corroborated in these words,



انى قد سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول من صلى  
يرائى فقد اشرك ومن صام يرائى فقد اشرك ومن تصدق  
يرائى فقد اشرك.

*"I have definitely heard Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) say that he who prays for show has committed 'Shirk' and that he who gives alms for show has committed 'Shirk'." (Musnad Ahmed, 4/126)*

The aspect of 'Shirk' inherent in false religiosity is made clear in this Tradition and is thus made more reprehensible.

'Showmanship' is there both in those who deny God and in the activities of those who believe in God. After all, why does man resort to it? What does he gain by it? There may be many reasons for it.

Man by nature hankers after appreciation and commendation. Everyone seeks to be referred to in laudatory terms. He should be associated with righteous deeds and auspicious attributes. There should be no backbiting about him. This aspiration is not undesirable up to a point. But when it exceeds the limits, it casts its spell upon all his activities. Whenever he performs a good act, he looks in all directions for compliments. He expects that recognition must be extended to a good act he has done. In his opinion, it is his right to expect praise, adulation, and panegyric. If there is no encouraging response from any quarter to his beautiful

act, he starts complaining about the lack of appreciation. This impulse for praise remains restive until a glowing tribute is paid to him.

Sometimes a lazy and evil person proposes not only to cover up his personal shortcomings and underirable acts but also to justify them through specious reasoning as the very soul of discretion and the initiatives of far-sightedness and then expects appreciation. The Jews' attitude towards religion left much to be desired and yet they desired to be known as doughty champions of religion. The hypocrites indulged in conspiracies against Islam and yet they wanted to be known as servants of the Muslim community. The Qur'an is critical about this attitude:

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أَتَوْا وَيُجَادُونَ أَنْ يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا  
فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

*"Think not that those who exult in what they have brought about, and love to be praised for what they have not done, - think not that they can escape the chastisement. For them is a chastisement grievous indeed."*<sup>1</sup>

(Qur'an 3:188)

The Tradition (Hadith) prohibits the use of pretentious apparel. A beggar should not try to pass off as a rich person. A hungry man should not pretend to have eaten his fill. A person without proper clothes to wear

(1) See Tafseer Ibne Katheer, 1/436 for the historical background of this verse.

should not borrow a rich man's clothing to make a sartorial claim of high status. Hazrat Asma, daughter of Hazrat Abu Bakr, (Allah be pleased with both) narrates:

إِنَّ امْرَأَةً قَالَتْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ لِي ضَرَّةً فَهَلْ عَلَيَّ جُنَاحٌ إِنْ  
تَشَبَّعْتُ مِنْ زَوْجِي غَيْرَ الَّذِي يُعْطَى فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ  
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْمَتَشَبِّعُ بِمَا لَمْ يُعْطَ كَلَابِسَ ثَوْبِي زُورًا-

*"One woman said, 'O Messenger of Allah! My husband has another wife. If I boast before her that in addition to what my husband has given me, he has also given me other things when he has not done so, is there a sin in it?' Then he replied, 'To say that a certain thing has been given, when actually it has not been given, is to put on false clothes.'"*<sup>1</sup>

The context for this Tradition is the risk, involved in such false claims, of a rift between the husband and another wife of his. This is a reprehensible act. According to religious scholars, demonstration of false piety is equally reprehensible. Similarly, a person deeply interested in this world should not mislead people by seeking sartorial similarity with truly and genuinely pious and God-fearing people.<sup>2</sup>

Hunger for appreciation, when it exceeds the limit, is transformed into avarice for name and fame, which becomes the axis around which all his endeavours revolve. This avarice contains unlimited energy within it

(1) Bukhari, Kitabun Nikah, Babul Tashabbah Bema lam yanal..., Muslim, Kitabul libas, Babunnahi an altazweer fil libas.

(2) Nawawi, Sharh Muslim: 2/706

and is enough to galvanize an individual. For the sake of this avarice he is prepared to stake his life and property. In order to gratify this avarice, amazing feats of human strengths and skills have been performed.

Avarice for name and fame gives birth to the disease of megalomania. When this avarice is not satisfied, then man starts writing a panegyric and compiling books with focus upon himself. He is not content until recognition is extended to his achievements. It is stated in the Traditions that if a man does good and then makes it known to all and sundry, on the Day of Judgment Allah will expose the defect in his motive and put such a person to shame in public. Hazrat Jundab (Abu Abdullah al-Bijli) (Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said:

مَنْ سَمِعَ سَمِعَ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَمَنْ يُرَائِي يُرَائِي اللَّهُ بِهِ.

*If a person tells others about his exploits, and seeks fame for them, Allah will expose his motive on the Day of Judgment; If a person shows (his exploits), Allah will expose his motive.<sup>1</sup>*

To do good with the intention of attracting popular applause is to invite chastisement from God. His wrath will be kindled. Severe warning is given. While narrating that warning, Hazrat Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with

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(1) Bukhari, Kitabur Riqaq, Babur Riya wa Sunnati  
Muslim, Kitabuz Zahd, Babur Tahreemur Riya

him) was emotionally perturbed and Hazrat Muawiyah (Allah be pleased with him) burst into tears.

Hazrat Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) says that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said, "On the Day of Judgment, Allah would descend to pass judgment. He will take up the case of three types of people. One individual would have met with martyrdom. Allah would remind him that he had been given strength, skill and energy. The person would acknowledge that it was true. Allah would then ask him how he showed his gratitude for the favours given and how he made use of his strength. He would reply, "O Allah! You ordered me to wage Jihad and I carried out your order. I spent all my energies in your way and fighting your enemies I got killed." The divine reaction would be, "You are telling a lie. You participated in Jihad to be acclaimed by people as a man of courage. Your desire was fulfilled and you earned reputation for your courage." Allah would order his angels to drag the martyr and to throw him into hell.

Another man would be a scholar who knew how to recite the Qur'an correctly. Allah would ask him if He had not granted him the knowledge of the Scripture. Then he would acknowledge that he was granted that knowledge. Then Allah would ask him how he showed his gratitude for it. The scholar would reply that he disseminated the knowledge of the Book, read the Book

thoroughly, committed it to memory and made it his daily routine to recite the Qur'an. Allah would declare that the scholar was a liar, he served the Qur'an to earn respect as a scholar and an expert reader. What he aimed at was given to him in the world. He had become famous. Orders would be given to drag him and throw him into hell.

The third person would be a man of wealth. He would be presented before God. Allah would ask him if He had not given him several assets. The rich man would acknowledge the gifts received. Allah would then ask him how he made use of them. He would reply that he spent his money on his relatives, and on righteous deeds, and in the manner approved by Him. Allah would reply that the rich man was a liar and that he spent money in order to be recognised on all hands as a philanthropist. That recognition was given. Consequently the rich man would share the fate of the martyr and the scholar.

(A brief version of this hadith is found in Muslim, Kitabul Amarath chapter of punishment for riya; Tirmithi gives fuller details, abwabuz Zuhd. Nasai, Kitabul Jihad.)

These three persons were associated with religious matters like the dissemination of scriptural knowledge, spending money on good deeds, and staking one's life in waging Jihad to establish Islam and to eradicate oppression. When the desire for fame becomes a vitiating motive for such noble and religious matters, it not only

wastes recompense, but also attracts chastisement.

The Traditions are clear that Allah shows His lack of interest in and disgust with any action that has no pure motive and is done to please others. Hazrat Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) says that the Messenger of Allah (blessing and peace be upon him) said,

قال الله تبارك تعالیٰ انا اغنی الشركاء عن الشرك من عمل عملا اشرك فيه معي غیرى تركته وشركه

*"The holy and sublime Allah says: I am totally averse to having partners. If anyone associates partners with Me and acts to please them too along with Me, I dissociate Myself from him and his act."*

(Muslim, kitabuz zuhd, chapter on riya)

Allah does not need any act that is done to please God and others. He wants that every act should be performed in accordance with His instructions and for His sake only. He is sensitive in this matter and does not approve of man-made distribution of loyalty between Him and others. He leaves that act to those whose pleasure also is sought along with His and keeps Himself aloof from that act. The above- mentioned Tradition has another version in which it is stated,

من عمل عملا اشرك فيه غیرى فانا منه برى ء وهو للذى اشرك

*"If someone acts and proposes to please Me along with some other person, I have nothing to do with that act, it belongs to that associate and (not to Me)."*

(Ibne Maja, chapters on Zuhd, and riya and Sum'ae, Musnade Ahmed, 2/301, 434)

Allah is extremely sensitive about His rights and does not tolerate parity with another (imaginary or real) person.<sup>1</sup> He approves of that act which is done to please Him alone. Any act that seeks God's approval as well as the appreciation of others is unacceptable to Him. Others may be pleased with such an act, it will not secure God's approval.

(For further details on this topic, my book "Social Service in Islam" may be consulted.)

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(1) 'Huperephonia' is the Cristian term for invading God's prerogatives.  
(Translator)





### III H. Steadfastness

#### (i) Faith and Steadfastness

The two words which capture the spirit of Islam are faith and steadfastness. Islam encompasses the whole of human life but these two words encompass it. Faith is related to the belief-system and steadfastness characterises the entire gamut of activities. The religion of man comprises belief and action and nothing more is needed. The objective of our activities is to please God and secure success in the Hereafter. The Qur'an makes it clear that the objective can be achieved through faith and steadfastness. That man who has been able to lead a life of faith and steadfastness in this world will be free from fear on that impending fearful Day and will receive good news of salvation and paradise from the angels.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا  
وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَابْتَغُوا الْبَهْجَةَ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ۝ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيُّكُمْ فِي  
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهُ أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا  
تَدْعُونَ ۝ نَزَّلْنَا مِنْ غُفُورٍ رَاحِمِينَ ۝

*"In the case of those who say, "Our Lord is Allah",  
and further stand straight and steadfast, the angels  
descend on them (from time to time) "Fear ye not!"  
'(they suggest), "nor grieve! But receive the glad*

*tidings of the Garden (of Bliss), the which ye were promised! We are your protectors in this life and in the Hereafter: therein shall ye have all that ye shall desire; therein shall ye have all that ye ask for! - A hospitable gift from One Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful!"*  
(Qur'an 41: 30-32)

Hazrat Sufyan bin Abdullah Thaqafi (Allah be pleased with him) asked the Benefactor of ours and the world's, Muhammad, (blessings and peace be upon him) "Please tell me one concise statement about Islam in such a way that I may not be obliged to ask others after your departure." The Prophet replied,"

قُلْ اٰمَنْتُ بِاللّٰهِ ثُمَّ اسْتَقِمْ

*Say: I believe in Allah. And then stick to it."*

(Sahih Muslim, kitabul Iman, chapter Jami Ausaful Islam)

This book began with the theme belief in Allah and towards the concluding part, stress is laid on steadfastness because these two are among the basic qualifications needed for the preaching of Islam.

## **(ii) Relationship between Faith and Steadfastness**

Belief in Allah triggers a great revolution in the pattern of thought and behaviour and changes man radically. This revolution is not synonymous with a sudden burst of energy. When it really emerges, it persists unto the last. The life of faith is nothing but a life of steadfast loyalty to truth. If a man accepts faith after

applying his mind, then he will be privileged to have steadfastness, and a spirit whose aspirations no power on earth can frustrate. He will cling to Truth; the most unnerving fear and the most seductive temptation will not make him swerve.

The compulsory effect of the belief in God is that God should rule over the entire existence of the believer and every initiative of his should be subject to the will of God. The most precious wealth of man is his life and a believer must have this ambition to sacrifice this most precious possession in the name of God when occasion demands. Every man seeks comfort and luxury; a believer must have within him a desire to sacrifice every comfort for the sake of Allah. Every man is busily engaged in seeking wealth and nobody wants to give it up. A believer must make up his mind to keep aloof from this rat race. Yearning for life, craze for money, desire for comfort are things which restrain man from sacrifice. However, it is a fact that perennial sacrifice alone enables a person to graduate from one stage of faith to a higher stage. He who saves everything does not gain. Instead he who spends everything gains. Blessed is he who makes his love for God prevail over all other loves and who renounces everything which displeases God only to please Him.

We have not been created in such a way as to make the road to faith easy. Instead, deep inside us, feelings of

revolt are found. We will attain to a life of faith only when we succeed in crushing these feelings. The life that faith wants cannot be secured along with comfort and luxury; it can be secured through hard and severe struggle. The greatest wish of man is to be autonomous and he does not want any obstacle in the fulfilment of his wishes but faith does not permit unfettered existence. We are made subject to the will of God. The world around us has a certain magnetism; there is a craving inside to secure this world at any cost, even at the cost of faith. If we attach value to faith, then we have to obey the orders of God in the matter of enjoying or giving up this delectable and attractive world. This is a difficult task indeed. If a man wants to please God, he will have to carry on this difficult task, and carry it on throughout his life.

### **(iii) Steadfastness is the requirement of Dawat**

The preaching of Islam requires steadfastness. It is necessary for the preacher to have self-control. He must be so strong in his objective as to resist temptations within and to cling tenaciously to truth. He must love faith so intensely that the world should not be able to buy him off. Without this steadfastness the tongue may invoke the name of religion repeatedly but it may not be easy to pursue the path of Islam and to pursue it boldly and incessantly.

#### **(iv) Steadfastness unto the Past**

To be steadfast in the path of Allah is not a short-term requirement but a lifelong one. Any mean motive can produce temporary enthusiasm whereas Islam wants a substantial and longlasting revolution, not an ad hoc sacrifice but a sacrifice at all times and in all matters. Under a spurt of energy even a great sacrifice becomes easy but to keep even the smallest thing away from one's life for ever is not that easy. It has often been observed that in an emergency a man may make an amazing sacrifice but in due course this enthusiasm declines. In that emergency a person paid scant regard to his life and property but later protecting life and property becomes his obsession. The bosom that was brimming with faith suddenly loses the warmth. A soldier that once could keep awake throughout the night out of his devotion to religion is now engaged in other matters so much that he is not able to spare even one hour for the same religion. A person who could not remain indifferent to religion in spite of scores of engagements now does not remember God and His religion in spite of long hours of leisure. A person who met the demands of religion even in poverty and straitened circumstances now ignores those demands in spite of vast resources and affluence. A man who used to ignore personal rest and comfort for the sake of his preoccupation with religion is not ready now to make an adjustment in his personal schedule. All this goes to prove that the erstwhile sacrifices were the result of temporary zeal or of some other motivating factor but the person concerned imagined that it was the fruit of his

love for faith. When faith is truly internalized, the zeal for sacrifice and martyrdom goes on increasing at every step. The delectable quality of faith does not decrease with the passage of time; instead, every new dawn enhances it. No bitterness reduces this inebriation.

Today God's religion calls upon its followers to gird up their loins for its dissemination and supremacy, to exert their utmost in the discharge of their duties, and to throw their heart and soul into their mission. The life that faith fosters has nothing to do with monasticism in which a man remains cloistered and lost in the remembrance of God and so engrossed in spiritual raptures as to become oblivious of the world outside. Faith is the name given to employing heart and soul in the service of God and to making a constant struggle in His way. If a person's obsession with spiritual raptures reaches a point wherein he loses interest in God's religion, then it means he has started worshipping (or got addicted to) spiritual raptures. Instead of enslaving himself to God's orders, he has enslaved himself to spiritual raptures.

#### **(v) Dawah -a ceaseless endeavour**

Belief in God has within itself a revolutionary message. Anyone who accepts Islam naturally becomes a volunteer of the revolution and a medium for the change that Allah wants in the domain of human thought and action. He has to convey the proposition of Truth to

those who have not heard it, to awaken those who are enjoying the sleep of indifference, and to bring to the notice of the people those facts with which they are not acquainted. By claiming to be a believer, he has gained certain things and lost certain things. This process of gaining and losing is his voluntary act. What he has gained, he has gained not without exercising his will-power. It was not in a state of carelessness or unconsciousness that he has lost what he has lost. The joys of this world for which innumerable people spend days and nights he has renounced not without a reason. He has renounced the joys to please God. If he has trampled upon the evil promptings within, he has done so out of his devotion to God and not aimlessly. If he has harmed the interests of his family and his own interests, he has done so to get closer to God. If he thinks that what he has done is true, then the truth demands that it should be conveyed to others. There must be a powerful urge within to re-enact the revolution in others which has taken place in himself, to ensure that the world gives up those thoughts and activities which he himself has given up, and ensure that everyone's life is illumined by those thoughts and activities which have made his life lustrous. When his ears hear the voice of revolt against God and he is not perturbed by it, then it means his faith has grown insensitive.

To discharge this duty of preaching that the



acceptance of Islam automatically imposes on man requires humongous steadfastness. It is not a commonplace initiative to believe in Allah and to raise the standard of His religion. It is tantamount to throwing down a gauntlet to all Satanic forces, and asking falsehood for an armed conflict. Therefore, falsehood, mobilising all its forces, may enter the arena to crush him. The preacher may have to pass through most trying conditions and he may be tested in every possible way. Everywhere people are singing praises of the freedom of thought and action but the worldwide scenario of intolerance against Islam is clearly visible to the naked eyes. The world wants to confine the practice of Islam to Prayer, fasting, and personal life and is not at all willing to sanction any connection between Islam and the business of existence. It goes against the grain of falsehood to tolerate Truth and allow it to grow from strength to strength. It will be unsparing towards the devotees of Truth who struggle to reform the individual and the social order in accordance with their belief system. The devotees will be made to feel that the vast world has become too narrow for them and they will be shocked to find their friends in the ranks of the enemies. The advice of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) given to one of his closest Companions, Hazrat Muaz (Allah be pleased with him), is relevant to such a critical situation.

لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ قُتِلْتَ أَوْ حُرِّقْتَ

*"Do not establish parity of anything with Allah even on pain of being put to sword or turned into a flaming torch."*

*(Musnad- e-Ahmed)*

There must be this determination in the preacher to be a slave to the One God and not to disobey His commandments as long as he is alive, even if it leads to death by beheading or by being burnt to a heap of ashes.

#### **(vi) The way of steadfastness is paved with thorns**

The way of steadfastness is full of difficulties. On this way, even titans of iron resolve begin to stagger. When misfortunes come in battalions from all quarters and a man is put to test under God's orders, then this situation scares him out of his wits. He does not want to abandon Truth but he begins to have cold feet. He wants to enter paradise without passing through trials and tribulations but God's law is such that to reach the House of Blessings one has to pass through fire and sword. When man's relationship with Truth gets weakened, it affects the line of his thinking and changes his psyche. Physically alive, he will be emotionally dead. He no longer sees what demand Truth is making on him, he sees only what others are doing. When he is reminded of his responsibilities, he will deny them but he will survey the remainder's life to point out to him where he has been deficient in the discharge of his own responsibilities and

how he has forgotten his own failures while advising others. If someone tells him that Truth demands the sacrifice of life and property, he will not reply that life and property are dearer to him than truth; instead he will say, "Mr X is sleeping; why don't you wake him up? If he is busy in his trade, then what crime have I committed if I could not spare my time?" Such a man may remain in touch with truth but his way will not be the superhighway of iron determination. Personal gain will enjoy top priority in his life and he can relegate the cause of truth to the background. He may wish to play so safe as to avoid calling a spade a spade. When pressures mount on him for championing the cause of truth and for inflaming falsehood, he will seek to syncretise truth and falsehood. He will think of ways and means of assuring falsehood that he remains an ally and that he is desirous of living in its shade and not of eradicating it and establishing God's religion. Discretion and scruple will stifle his voice. Treading the path of truth, he will feel exhausted, his feet will stagger, his resolutions will get enfeebled. The aims and ambitions with which he commenced his journey would lose their steam. He will start seeking rest and comfort and will prefer to lie down. The distance of the destination and the dangers of the destination and the dangers of the way would frighten him. His tongue will not have the expression of determination; instead it will pour out woeful complains about the inimical conditions

that he has to contend with. Sometimes, after openly submitting a long list of his excuses and weaknesses, he will show his happiness and contentment by saying that, in the given circumstances, the service being rendered to the cause of religion is considerable indeed.

### (vii) The demands of steadfastness

The truth is that the task of inviting people to the religion of God defies patience. It is an extremely rough terrain and everyone cannot easily cross it. Only that person, who will not complain of blisters on the feet and the immobility of the hands, who will not get scared by the stumbling blocks on the way and give up the pursuit but will feel new energy bursting within him at every fall, who will not be pushed back by the hurricane of opposition but will remain firm like a rock, who keeps his faith intact while confronting a foe and who looks upon every trial as a stepping stone to victory, can cross the rough terrain.

الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا  
مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقُوا أَجْرَ عَظِيمٍ

*"Of those who answered the call of Allah and the Messenger, even after being wounded, those who do right and refrain from wrong have a great reward."*

(Qur'an 3:172)

'When me you punish every time,

It whets my craze for further "crime"!

The call to faith is a prophetic mission. Anyone who espouses this mission may have to pass through the phases encountered by the Prophets and their respective followers. Their own people treated them as though they were enemies. They were persecuted in every possible way, they were declared heretics, they were made homeless, their hard-earned money was confiscated, some of them were beheaded. All these punishments were meted out to them for the "crime" of believing in only one God and for inviting people to His religion.

الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ<sup>ط</sup>

*"(They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, - (for no cause) except that they say, "Our Lord is Allah."* (Qur'an 22:40)

The spirit of the times is the same today as it was during the epochs of the Prophets. The enemy is strong. The preachers and the servants of Islam are very weak. But it has to be borne in mind that in the teeth of opposition to Islam he, who retraces his steps, puts to shame his claim to faith. What he confirmed orally he now contradicts practically. The unholy posture that he has taken disgraces his holy faith. By preferring the world to truth, he has proved his viewpoint that truth is not so invaluable as to render the world irrelevant. In his scheme of love, the world has replaced the Truth. When he accepted faith, he made it clear that his life was not his, but God's. By renouncing Truth, he makes it clear

that his life is an asset which he is not willing to sell to God. Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) advised Hazrat Muaz (Allah be pleased with him) and this advice is applicable to me and you.

إِيَّاكَ وَالْفِرَارَ مِنَ الزَّحْفِ وَإِنْ هَلَكَ النَّاسُ

*"From the battleground of Jihad, do not take to heels even when all have been laid low." (Musnad-e-Ahmed, 5/238)*

Preachers must clearly understand that conditions may supersede love for the religion, people may evince interest in feathering their own nests and in pampering their selves, scholars, and the elite may not be prepared to give up their luxury, the witnesses to the religion of Truth may die one by one and those who utter the name of Allah may flee the scene (as is the case today), even then there should be no sign of weakness in the steadfastness of those who call people to faith. It is a matter of extreme good fortune that they have got a blessed and auspicious opportunity to struggle for truth and to make a sacrifice. These are the ladders of upward mobility provided for the benefit of Allah's devotees and servants of faith to enable them to reach the highest point of God's appreciation. Whenever opportunities to call people to faith and to struggle for the supremacy of Islam are available to Allah's devotees and they do not have to face many trials in their mission, then they must thank Allah for not subjecting them to a severe trial and for protecting them from it. Suppose conditions go from bad to worse, you are obliged to face the most severe trials,

the dark cells of the prison-house are kept vacant for you, you are forced to walk through huge columns of fire, and the guillotine is being decorated for you, then you can conclude victory is within easy reach. It is a sign that God's grace has turned towards you. He has selected you for the conferment of His unlimited favours. Truth is such an invaluable asset for a man to get that laying life down at its altar is a very ordinary sacrifice. If you abandon the path of truth for its unfamiliarity and for the absence of companions, then your evaluation of Truth leaves much to be desired. Similarly, if you subscribe to Truth because the atmosphere is conducive to it and because falsehood has not extended its patronage to you, then it is not Truth that you follow but the conditions around you. Remember, a very big crime in Allah's court is retreat from Truth. When God's religion demands your life and you get an opportunity to sacrifice your most precious gift to secure Allah's pleasure and reward, and then you choose to waste this opportunity, you are acting against the interests of your faith. Your victory lies in spending your treasure for the sake of Truth and you have to reach the presence of Allah after emptying your coffers because then you are going to get a wealth which many will not get tomorrow, and, on seeing your victory, may exclaim in frustration: Alas, if only we could have pleased our Master! Alas, if only the world had been snatched away from us! Alas, if only we had not allowed Hereafter to be ruined!

## **IVA. Message and Organization**

### **(i) Need for Organization**

Organization is considered extremely necessary for the promotion of any movement or mission. It stands to reason that for the dissemination of the message of Islam also there should be an organization. However, it is quite strange that no need for and no significance of an organization is envisaged in several Muslim groups. Any mission founded on any ideology can establish its own organization in this world but it is distasteful to some and highly objectionable to some others if an organization comes into existence specifically for calling people to Islam. In their view, the best way to call people to Islam should be individualistic or at the most a few individuals can come together whenever necessity arises for the service of Islam. In their view, it is improper to establish a permanent organization which can think out strategies for the dissemination of the message of Islam and for its triumph, which can prepare a plan for it, and which can employ some people to implement the plan, and which can function like other movements. Among the critics of an organization there are people who sincerely want



misunderstandings about Islam to be removed and who desire the progress and spread of Islam; there is no dearth of people amongst them who do research on Islam with dedication and write dissertations on its various aspects and employ their best skills to prove the truth of the principles and viewpoints of Islam, to criticise non-Islamic thoughts and are in the forefront to expose the deficiencies of the non-Islamic thoughts, and going a step further such people encourage and commend those servants of Islam who work according to their taste and even to cooperate with them unhesitatingly. But, if the same service is rendered not by individuals but by a party, then it is looked upon with disfavour by the same critics, and they will not cooperate with such a party. It is as though the right way to serve Islam should be in individual capacity and the collective effort to serve the religion is undesirable. If any proof for this mindset and this reaction is elicited, the stock reply will be that there is no historical precedent for the formation of an organization in the Qur'an and the Sunnah and in the initial epoch of Islamic history. If you are not convinced by this reply and you offer rational proofs for the need of an organized effort, the critics reply that you are swayed by non-Islamic movements, and that, under the influence of the modern attitude that movement and organization should go hand in hand, you find it difficult to understand how without an organization you can invite

people to accept Islam.

The viewpoint of the critics is irrational and has no basis in the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the history of Islam. If modern movements deem an organization to be necessary, it cannot therefore be deduced that Islam opposes organization. It is possible that for both the spread of Islam and of its counterpart, an organization may be unavoidable. It is a fact that the need of an organization is greater for the success of a mission than that of feet for walking and of hands for manual labour. No movement can ever succeed without an organization. In this world, every type of ideology, good or wrong, continues to emerge and some ideologies have even created powerful revolutions but, in the whole history, not a single revolution can be traced to the efforts of disorganized and disparate elements. A general survey of the commencement and progress of various movements leads not only to the conclusion that new ideas have their origin in the minds of the individuals and that it is the individuals who propagate their ideas but also to the conclusion that when some individuals agree upon a new ideology they form an organization. If this organization is dynamic, the new entrants merge respectively their thoughts, their actions, and even their identity into the thoughts, the actions and the identity of the organization. With the help of these new entrants, the organization advances and prospers, continuously attracting and trying

to prevail upon others. If there is no strong organization behind a message, then its voice gets lost in the atmosphere and fades away without leaving an impact upon the thoughts and ideas of the times. It is a historical truth that even perverse ideologies tasted success and triumph when an organized effort was made to spread them; similarly even an impeccable ideology sometimes failed to prevail because it could not secure the services of a good organization.

For the success of a mission, the following are necessary: it should be able to complete an urgent task at the appropriate time, it should be able to implement the well-conceived plan, it should know how to put to best use the means and resources available, it should be in possession of the necessary leverage to turn the direction of knowledge and literature, culture and ethics, and politics and government. It is obvious that no individual has ever had or can be expected to ever have that strength needed for such a huge task. No individual has the skill and the strength to execute several jobs, he can at best do one or two tasks, and whatever job he takes up, he cannot do it on a scale which will make it complete from every angle and serve every end. All this is possible for a good organization. A single waterdrop cannot have the force of a flood; but when waterdrops collect in large numbers and assume the shape of a mighty river, then they become a force to reckon with, they plough through the earth,

overflowing the banks. Similarly, the skills of an individual are very limited. When individuals get organized under the banner of an ideology, they become powerful enough to eradicate viewpoints and establish a brave new world of ideas. It is not impossible to have individuals of assorted abilities in a strong and good organization. Consequently, the organization can utilize the services of those people whose skills are much required for a particular job, and it can increase its volunteer strength at a front where inadequate strength is available.

Those who oppose the need of an organization for calling people to Islam do not quite know how a mission succeeds and what strategies are required for success.

## **(ii) Strange Excuses**

Some people do not think it wrong to have an organization for calling people to Islam and they even realize its importance. However, in spite of this realization, they neither take the initiative to form an organization nor join an organization which is already engaged in the task. They have excuses for their aloofness. Let us take them up for discussion. This will give an idea how justified they are who propose to serve Islam without an organization on the basis of these excuses.

(1) One excuse is that, of course, an organization is

needed to spread a message but, in the modern context, such an organization will cause more harm and bring less benefit. We are surrounded by conditions dominated by anti- Islamic thoughts, and feelings against Islam are rife. In such an atmosphere there is always a risk that the ruling ideology may consider any organized attempt to spread Islam and to work for its dominance as an act of hostility and absolutely refuse to tolerate it. To ward off this risk, individuals may carry on this mission individually and their work should not take on the shape of an organized effort inviting confrontation with the authorities that be. It is the demand of wisdom and far-sightedness that we should adopt a strategy which makes the continuity of the mission possible and avoid a strategy which may terminate the mission itself.

Is this excuse convincing? If the necessity of an organization for the spread of Islam is recognized and it is understood that without an organization justice cannot be done to the task in hand, then an organization has to be established whether conditions are conducive or hostile. It is also not correct to say that only an organized attempt to spread Islam will be opposed and that individual attempts will not be opposed because the message of Islam is at any rate a revolutionary message. The message is nothing but a proclamation that the rule of God must be established on the earth of God and that any other rule is not valid. Whenever such a proclamation

is made, even if it is made only through one mouth, the political authority of the period concerned will treat it as an act of treason and the one who makes the proclamation will receive the punishment reserved for a traitor. No one can indicate that epoch wherein the commencement of the Islamic movement was enthusiastically welcomed by the authorities that be. The fact of the matter is that there are trials, severe ones at that, in the process of this mission and they are by no means avoidable. Only those people, who have the grit and determination to face the wrath of the powers that be, can dare to initiate the Islamic movement. Men of lesser courage can but take a step or two on this road.

(2) The second excuse is that we are beset with serious deficiencies and their presence disqualifies us from admission to an organization which is carrying on the sacred duty of spreading Islam. Until we get rid of these deficiencies, we can not join the organization.

If this excuse is described as a lame excuse, it will not be wrong. The presence of deficiencies does not justify non-participation in a missionary work; instead, it entails a responsibility to remove them as soon as possible. If a person's clothes are not clean, it does not behove him to give up Prayer altogether; the right action will be to wash the clothes and to pray. Similarly, if a person's deficiencies are of such a nature as to exclude him from an Islamic organization, then he has to give up

every other work and turn his attention wholly and immediately to the task of self-reform and to prepare himself for an organized effort to serve Islam. He is not justified in leading a complacent life in the presence of such deficiencies.

Whenever a reference is made to the eradication of deficiencies, some people maintain that they are keenly aware of their defects and that they are not negligent towards the need to remove them. It has been noticed that the passage of time does not bring about any appreciable change in their condition. This excuse of deficiencies prevents them from playing their part in the service of Islam as long as they live. This implies that they are not really aware of their deficiencies and that they are using their acknowledgement of deficiencies as a shield for the neglect of their duties. A genuine awareness of deficiencies will not allow a man to remain permanently stuck to them and to remain subject to them.

(3) The third excuse is that first there should be an organization dedicated to the spread of Islam and being run on the right lines. The elements of piety, religiosity, high morals, love for Islam, sacrifice for Islam must be present in such an organization and it should become pre-eminent for such virtues. For the service of Islam, only such a reputed organization is needed. In the present era, such an organization is conspicuously absent and so, even if we aspire to make a collective struggle for the

service of Islam, we are not able to do so.

It is denying the obvious if it is said that today there is no Islamic organization. By Allah's grace, there are many organizations working at present on the right lines in different parts of the world for the service of Islam. If a person is not uncharitable, he can see that these organizations are definitely endowed to some extent with those qualities needed for the dissemination of the Islamic message. The right procedure for one who volunteers to serve Islam is to survey in all sincerity his immediate surroundings and enrol himself with that organization which is discharging the duty of spreading Islam. Keeping aloof from such an organization will be right only when there is such a prominent defect in it as to make it ineligible to spread Islam. But if there are only trivial weaknesses in it, then it is not in keeping with the dignity of a believer if he tries to weaken the organization further or to disgrace it or to keep aloof from it. The correct behaviour will be to cooperate with it in its holy mission and to struggle to rectify its defects.

Let us assume for the time being that there is no purely Islamic organization in any country, nay in the world. But on that score the responsibility of the collective struggle for Islam which God has imposed upon a Muslim is not automatically cancelled; it continues to remain. Instead, it is redoubled. In such a situation, two tasks have to be done. First, ceaseless



efforts have to be made to establish an organization on the right lines for the service of Islam. Second, when such an organization comes into existence, join it and discharge the duty of spreading Islam. Just as calling people to faith is a compulsory duty, it is equally necessary to secure the resources necessary for the purpose.

### (iii) Instruction of the Qur'an and the Hadith

What methodology do the Qur'an and the Hadith advocate for calling people to Islam? First and foremost, both enjoin discipline and unity upon Muslims in clear terms and prohibit difference and disunity. The Qur'an says:

وَاَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا

*"And hold fast, all together, by the Rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves."*

(Qur'an 3:103)

There are Traditions dealing with this topic. One Hadith is offered. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said,

عليكم بالجماعة واياكم والفرقة

*"Cling to Jamaath (collective integration) and avoid disunity among your ranks."*

(Jami Tirmithi, chapters on Mischief, باب ماجاء فى الزوم الجماعة, Musnade Ahmed, 5/370, 371)

In addition to these instructions of the Qur'an and the

Hadith, bear in mind this fact also that calling people to Islam is a characteristic or an activity which distinguishes Muslims from the advocates of atheism and polytheism. Muslims invite the world to accept Islam and to avoid deviation. Keeping these two statements before us, let us now ponder over the question: Which is the best way to spread the message of Islam? Is it a work for individuals from the point of view of the Qur'an and the Hadith or do they deem it necessary to have an organized endeavour? There is only one answer to the question and it is that an organization is needed to disseminate the message of Islam. The general and comprehensive instruction for discipline and unity given to Muslims must have a natural bearing upon that work also or upon that work first which draws a line of distinction between them and others, which tells what their distinct position is, and why their position is unique. If this discipline is not for that noble work, what else is it for? Moreover, how is it right that those who strive for atheism and polytheism are allowed to organize themselves whereas the preachers of Islam are advised not to organize their energies to meet the demands of preaching but to be content with individual efforts? The Qur'an clearly states that the forces of atheism and polytheism unite against Islam and that Muslims should be united too to take on the hostile forces.

قَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَآلِهِ كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَآلَهُ

*"And fight the pagans all together as they fight you all together."*  
(Qur'an 9:36)

The transparent objective of the words of the Qur'an and the Hadith is that Muslims should have unity and organization and these qualities must be there primarily for the preaching of Islam. If they preach Islam and do so without a concerted effort, then it will be not on the lines desired and prescribed by the Qur'an and the Hadith. In the same manner, if there is an organization and instead of preaching Islam it does something else, then it is not an organization which God and His Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) advised us to have. The following two verses of the Qur'an make the point clear:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ  
*"You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong."*

(Qur'an 3:110)

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَ يُكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

*"Thus have We made of you an ummat justly balanced. That ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves."*

(Qur'an 2:143)

These verses describe Muslims as "Ummat". In 3:110, they are "Khair-e-Ummat"; in 2:143, they are "Ummat-e-Wasat". This word "Ummat" connotes that

they have a common bond and their existence is an organized and collective life. Scattered and disconnected individuals do not constitute an "Ummat". This word is applied to a party whose members converge on a central point with a purpose. In the words of the Qur'an, this supreme and justice-oriented community has come into existence with the following aims: promote goodness, forbid evil, and bear witness to God's religion. In plain words, this is the preaching of Islam. The advent of an ummat for this preaching indicates the need of an organization. Any organization for any purpose comes into existence when it is necessary for its completion. When individuals can complete a job, then a party will not be formed for the purpose.

#### **(iv) The Precedent set by Prophet Muhammad**

**(blessings and peace be upon him)**

How did Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) discharge the duty of spreading the message of Islam? What strategy did he shape for it? The strategy he liked must be the most suitable for the purpose. A study of history makes it clear that he adopted a two-pronged strategy - on the one hand, he called people towards Islam and on the other hand, he integrated those who accepted his message into an Ummat. The farther the message spread, the wider the circle grew. In the beginning the followers could be

counted on fingers; at the time of his departure from the earth, his following could be counted in lakhs.

**(v) He established a Well-organized Ummat**

As there is a sea of difference between the way other parties are formed and organized and the way the Prophet's Ummat was formed and organized, some people come to a conclusion that the Prophet's Ummat was not an organized party at all. This conclusion reflects an inadequate familiarity with the *raison d'etre* of a party. Unlike the parties of the present day, the Ummat of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) did not charge any admission fee, did not insist upon the submission of a duly-filled in prescribed application form, did not prescribe a specially designed uniform. These are all superficial features. On their basis it cannot be asserted that his Ummat was a disorganized and scattered grouping. The superficial features do not constitute the soul of an organization; without them, a superior organization can come into existence; and, in the presence of these features, an organization may remain hollow.

Two things organize individuals - objective and attachment for it; and leadership and loyalty to it. The objective is the point of convergence for members from different quarters. The greater the attachment, the keener the desire for the attainment of the objective. They

struggle for it; they make sacrifices for it. In the absence of the objective, assorted individuals will not have a common integrating factor, in the absence of the attachment for the objective, the initiative and the desire to achieve will be absent too and no effort will be forthcoming. Leadership indicates the prescribed route to achievement and success and members pledge their loyalty in the hope of actually realizing the objective. There will be stagnation or anarchy in the organization without leadership. Members are stirred to action and efforts are channelized into a particular direction by a dynamic leadership.

These two factors which bring individuals together to form an organization were fully present in the ummat of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him). It came into existence with a lofty ideal. The ideal was to call people to Islam. The ummat loved the ideal intensely, was highly motivated to preach Islam, was extremely obsessed with the thought of spreading Islam and making it dominant, and was filled with a prodigious desire to make sacrifices for Islam. It is a fact, an undeniable one, that the ummat left no stone unturned to make Islam and its preaching successful, invested its most invaluable assets in it, and every individual member constantly strove to spread it, and whatever every member could do to meet the different demands of Islam he did. There are several examples. If Islam needed monetary aid, one

person who had accepted it gave fifty percent of his holdings and another convert handed over one hundred percent of his property. On one occasion, an individual equipped a whole army with its military hardware single-handedly. The wealthy members of the ummat were offering their wealth at the altar of Islam. The poor members shed tears over their inability to contribute their mite. At the call of Islam, this ummat made a bee-line for the battleground of Jihad ignoring the luxuriant farmlands ready for harvest, the thriving business firms, the dearest children, and the most beloved wives as though they had not existed for them at all. Every member of this ummat loved this mission of Islam so much that this love for Islam became the criterion and determining factor for friendship and enmity. He would confront hostile consanguinity and he would embrace a personal and sworn enemy as a long-lost friend if he espoused the cause of Islam. This ummat and every member of this ummat did for the message of Islam all that any human group could do - made great sacrifices, spent sleepless nights, gave up livelihood, sacrificed life on demand, spent money on demand. Not only this. Whatever type of cooperation Islam required, and whenever it required it, they offered it as a votive offering and offered it readily as though it was a consummation of their desire and as though they had been eagerly waiting for the occasion.

In this whole process, Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) was personally leading the ummat. Only that person gained admission to this ummat who acknowledged from the bottom of his heart that Muhammad was Allah's Messenger and every order of his was binding upon him. In this way, the ummat was being formed and people gathered together in all sincerity under his banner and happily carried out his instructions. They heard and obeyed him in such a way that if Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) gave an order to someone, that person will be very eager to execute it. The Prophet ordered his followers to migrate, and they migrated unhesitatingly. When he asked them to boycott the family or the tribe, they did so happily. When he asked them to be patient in hardships, they did not utter a word of complaint. When he asked them to take part in Jihad, they bravely got killed. This implicit and unquestioning loyalty to the leader was not seen in any organization earlier and has not been put into practice since then. So viewed from this angle, it may not be amiss to state that this ummat had all those characteristics to the nth degree which are associated with a standard organization. These characteristics transformed the whole ummat into a single structure and transfused the highest degree of discipline and unity into it. The individual member and the whole organization both acted in total unison. When the whole ummat



worked in this manner under the leadership of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) day and night, then Islam prevailed and its preaching succeeded.

The success of a message is not to be understood merely as a state of coming to power after bulldozing all hostile forces. This success includes the feat of running the business of life in accordance with the blueprint already presented. This can be done only when the mission has such volunteers who do not forget their ideology under the intoxication of power, who do not abandon their philosophy of life under any circumstances, whether happy or sad, whether better or straitened, who are convinced of the supremacy of their system of thought and belief and who are convinced that they have the Truth and that it is their duty to implement it. If an organization does not have such volunteers, it may succeed in bringing about a political revolution but not in bringing about a doctrinal and cultural revolution; its success may be counterproductive and it may work against the interests of its own pet theories.

The unique excellence of the organization that came into being under the leadership of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) was that it had the capacity to bring about a political revolution on the one hand and a doctrinal and cultural revolution on the other because the organization could provide the high profile volunteers needed for such a revolution. There was no

feeling of failure in implementing its policy in any sphere of life. When the Prophet's mission fully prevailed, it appeared as though it had fully trained personnel to run the government. There were teachers, judges, men with the gift of the gab and men with poetical skills, governors and bureaucrats, generals and army commanders, ambassadors and official spokesmen, politicians and the rulers. Thus there was an organization capable of serving different aspects of disseminating an ideology. Was all this achieved without an organization? If so, then it can be safely assumed that no organization ever came into existence in this world.

#### **(vi) The Decline of the Organization of the Ummat**

Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) adopted the above-mentioned procedure for the preaching of Islam. After his departure from the world, his Ummat was organized and united from every angle. This organized ummat survived him and rendered sterling service to Islam. It preached and spread Islam in far- flung areas, and it waged jihad for its sake until the rule of Islam was established over a considerable area of the civilized world. However, as time passed, the organization of this ummat grew weaker. At last the time came when the ummat was there but its discipline and unity ceased to exist. This happened in spite of the repeated instruction of the Prophet (blessings and peace

be upon him) that his followers should remain bonded with the organization (Jamaat). Separation from the organization keeps a man distant from Islam. The Prophet said:

انه من خرج من الجماعة قيد شبر فقد خلع ربقة الاسلام من عنقه

*"Anyone, who comes out of the organized group even a little, undoubtedly throws away the yoke of Islam."*

(Musnad-e-Ahmed, 1/275, 297, Jami Tirmithi, chapters on  
(باب ماجاء في مثل الصلوة والصيام والصدقة Adab)

His instruction was that even the smallest group of Muslims, including those living in the forest, even if they were three, must remain organized. But Muslims, in spite of being in millions, got scattered as though they had no unifying factor. The Prophet clearly stated:

لا يحل لثلاثة نفر يكونون بارض فلاة الا امروا عليهم احدهم-

*"It is not proper for three persons, even if they live in the wilderness, (to live without order). It is necessary that one of them should be made a leader (and they should lead an orderly life)." (Musnad-e-Ahmed, 2/177)*

He went to the extent of saying that if Muslims were united and had a well-knit grouping of their own, then anyone who tried to break up their unity and orderliness, however eminent he would be, could forfeit his life.

من اراد ان يفرق امر هذه الامة وهي جميع فاضربوه بالسيف  
كائن من كان-

*"When this ummat is united and if a man attempts to*

*create disunity among their ranks, put him to sword, whoever he may be."*

(*Sahih Mulsim, Kitabul Amarat* بات حکمن فرق امر المسلمین)

Unfortunately, we did not act upon these instructions. Had we done so, the Muslim solidarity would not have been broken and we could have avoided the losses which the disintegration entailed. Have we ever thought why that person who torpedoes the Muslim solidarity is such a menace that it is permissible to shed his blood? The reason is that to run the affairs of the world in the way that Islam wants, the discipline and the unity of the Muslims are most essential. Without these qualities, it is impossible to run the system. A person who creates disunity among the Muslims is actually tearing to shreds the system established by Islam. This became apparent, when the unity of the Muslims ended; Islam, which was dominant over a large area of the earth, lost its authority as a result. Another loss appeared. Muslims, as an organized unit, gave up the mission of calling others to Islam. No doubt, the duty of preaching continued but it was discharged by individuals or small groups. Though we acknowledge their services to Islam, it is difficult to deny that if the whole community had been discharging the duty of preaching, the result would have been much more satisfying than what accrued through the efforts of individuals and small groups.

### **(vii) The Task Ahead**

When the organization of the ummat broke down, the best way to rectify the situation was to return to the status quo ante and to resume discharging the duty of preaching Islam. But the tragedy is that such a rectifying course did not take place. Some attempts were made in this connection but to no avail. Whatever the reasons, one fact remained. The condition in which the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) left the community at the time of his departure from the world and in which he wanted it to remain by repeated instructions did not continue. And now the task ahead for those who are agonizingly aware of the present state of affairs is that they should come together from every quarter and get organized for the same duty for which their ancestors got organized under the leadership of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) and then they should bring other individuals and groups of the ummat together for the same purpose. If this ummat gets truly united and this unity is Islam-oriented, then it may not be far-fetched to think that history may repeat itself and the world may see a replication of the revolution whose model it had already seen more than fourteen hundred years ago. *Wa ma thalika ala Allahi biazeez.*

## **IV B. Consolidation of an Organization**

The strength of an organization comes from within. If the core of an organization is strong, it will not be easy to wind it up. However, if an organization's vitals had been eaten from within, it will collapse of its own accord. The substantial capital of an organization is its human resource. An external well-wisher cannot be an integral part of that capital. The survival, the consolidation, and the growth of an organization depend, not on the external well-wishers, but on the members within. To modify this statement further, not on all the members within, but on those members who possess certain special characteristics; these form the theme in this chapter. The direct and target addressees are those individuals who have organized themselves to obey implicitly and sincerely the Deen founded by God and to disseminate its multi-dimensional message.

### **(i) Awareness of Togetherness**

The preceding pages have made it abundantly clear, with proofs and complete details, that Allah and His Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) favoured, not an individualistic, but a collective lifestyle for the

Muslims. They have not been divided into various groupings but they have been welded into one brotherhood. However, it is an established fact that, since a long time, Muslims had given this instruction a go-by. They constituted one Millath or fraternity but chose to split into splinter groups. They ought to have remained a well-integrated group but they got scattered and divided. There is only one reason for it; they banished from their actual lives the Book that God sent, the Book that could have functioned as a centripetal force in their social set-up. God ordered the Muslims to make the Book an arbitrator in their mutual disputes. Instead, they adopted all those methods which other people adopt to solve their problems and they turned not towards the Book. God ordered the Muslims that they should regulate their lives in accordance with the Book but they ignored it and preferred to be guided by the enemies of God for the reconstitution of their lives. They were instructed that, in matters pertaining to worship, morals, societal affairs, governance and all other matters, they should accept the Book as their leader but they ignored it and chose to abide by their personal whims and fancies, by their family or tribal traditions, by social customs, by the official decrees. In such circumstances you have come together on the principle of making the Book of God central to your lives and are determined to hold on to the cable of God. This is a good augury and a blessing that

you have received at a time when the whole community is passing through bewilderment. You must value this blessing earnestly and it is your duty to reinforce it.

There is another dimension to your togetherness. You are not simply interested in enhancing the aesthetic appeal of your lives by means of the Book of God; you propose to provide guidance to the world. You are aware that, though Muslims in general are quite far away from God's religion, there are still amongst them genuine devotees of God and sincere servants of His religion. The only shortcoming in them is that they do not belong to a cohesive grouping. They do not render service in a united, consensual and organized manner. That is why their efforts do not produce those results which could have been actually produced. Today, evil is so well-organized and so well-entrenched that even the greatest individual cannot liquidate it single-handedly. It is therefore necessary that goodness must be organized too. That is exactly what you propose to do.

When the servants of God's religion are scattered, you have come together under the banner of an organization to serve Islam. All around you evil is organized and you are organized to uphold goodness. This initiative of yours fulfils the wish of God and His Prophet. Be grateful to God for this and invoke His help for remaining steadfast.



You have thrown in your lot with an organization which has come into being to serve the cause of Islam, which wants to eliminate vices and which wants to foster virtues. To cause harm to this organization in any manner is to cause harm to Islam. So, before doing anything, you have to ensure that your action does not have harmful consequences for the organization. If you forget the interests of the organization in your activities, it will mean that you are not fully aware of the value of your organization.

Any organization, or any party for that matter, can become strong when its members are preoccupied with the thought of its consolidation. This preoccupation is the result of the sense of togetherness. The greater the sense of togetherness, the stronger the ties with the organization. If this sense is weaker, the ties with the organization tend to be weaker. If the sense of togetherness is alive and strong, a person bears the heaviest loss calmly for the sake of the organization and defeats every attempt which aims at the sabotage of the solidarity. If this sense of togetherness is weak, then a member wants to get out of the organization on the flimsiest of the grounds; if the sense of togetherness disappears, then he gets bewildered with the party discipline and is ever on the lookout for some excuse to snap ties with the organization.

It has been seen that, when some people notice

something distasteful to their temperament in the organization or are faced with a policy decision not quite in keeping with their opinion or wish, they break away from the organization as though they have offered their support to it on condition that its decisions should be subject to their approval. The individual does not wish to modify his opinion to conform to the thinking of the institution and prefers that the institution should fall in line with his thinking. If every member asserts his individuality in this way, the decision-making of the organization will be forestalled and the initiative in any matter will be denied to it.

Some people have complaint against an individual and this in their eyes is a sufficient cause to walk out of the organization. Even if this complaint is one hundred per cent true, it means that for the sake of the party they are not able to put up with the misdemeanour or harsh speech of an individual. People with such zero tolerance are not quite worthy of keeping abreast with the party and they are a liability. Their exit is a blessing in disguise for the party.

Some people ascribe their personal short-comings to the party and express their disgust. For example, if they have deviated from the party objective, they will not own it as their mistake. They will declare that the party no longer espouses its objective. If they are inactive, they will not take measures to rectify themselves. Instead, they

will "prove" that the party has become non-functional. If there is some insufficiency in their piety, goodness, honesty and trustworthiness, they will not turn their attention to self-reform. Instead, they will "prove" that the entire party is devoid of the fear of God and of honesty and trustworthiness. This means that they are not so desirous of self-reform as they are of tarnishing the image of the party. Had they directed their efforts towards self-purification, they would have served self-interest better and the interest of the party too to which they belong.

Such defects appear when the sense of togetherness is either absent or weak. If this sense is strong and considers it to be necessary for the service of Islam, then he will value his participation in a party as a great blessing and will never try to run away from it and will always try to maintain his relationship with it. If he has some shortcoming which makes him unsuitable for the party, then he will remove the shortcoming in order to become fit for the party and will not take any step that harms the party established to serve Islam and not for any worldly gain.

## **(ii) Loyalty to the Leader**

Every organization demands a chief executive. Both need each other. When some members choose a leader and agree to follow him, an organization is born. An

inbuilt feature is that members are expected to obey the leader's orders. If a member is unwilling to obey, the organization cannot connive at it. Acquiescence to this indiscipline sounds the death-knell of the organization; no one gives orders and no one takes orders.

There are principles and postulates for whose sake an organization comes into being and upholds them actively. The leader has to ensure that both he and other members live up to them. As long as the leader does this job, every member has to cooperate with him irrespective of personal likes and dislikes and irrespective of his inclinations. On occasions he may come across certain things which he may deem inimical to both himself and to the organization but if those things are subject to the principles and postulates which form the foundation of the organization, then he will have to tolerate them. He can withdraw his loyalty to the leader only when the leader's order is clearly against the basic principles and postulates of the organization. Hazrat Abdullah, son of Hazrat Umar (Allah be pleased with both) said that Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) advised as follows:

السمع والطاعة على المرء المسلم ما احب وكره ما لم يؤمر  
بمعصية فاذا امر بمعصية فلا سمع ولا طاعة

*Every male Muslim cannot but obey his leader both in a matter which he likes and in a matter which he dislikes as long as he is not ordered to commit a sin.*

*When such an order is given he can refuse to hear it and to obey it.*

(Sahih Bukhari Kitabul Jihad, Kitabul Ahkam; Sahih Muslim, Kitabul  
(باب وجوب طاعة الامراء فى غير معصية Amarat

A narration with a similar import has been passed on by Hazrat Ummal Haseen (Allah be pleased with her) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said,

ان امرّ عليكم عبد مجدّع يقودكم بكتاب الله فاسمعوا له  
واطيعوا

*"If a slave with a deformed nose and (deformed) ears becomes your leader, even then listen to him and obey him when he leads according to the Book of God."*

(Muslim, Kitabul Hajj جمرة العقبة باب استجاب رضى

Ubada bin Samith (Allah be pleased with him) said,

بايعنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على السمع والطاعة فى  
العسر واليسر والمنشط والمكره وعلى اثرة علينا وعلى ان لا  
ننازع الامر اهله وعلى ان نقول بالحق اينما كنا لا نخاف فى  
الله لومة لائم وفى رواية وعلى ان لا ننزع الامر اهله الا ان  
تروا كفر ابواحا عندكم من الله فيه برهان.

*"We made a pledge with Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) that we will carry out our leader's orders, and we will obey him in times of relief as well as stress, whether we are pleased with him or not, even if we are marginalised and others are patronised. We made a pledge that we will not snatch governance from the ruler and that we will tell the*

*truth wherever we are and in matters of faith we will pay no heed to any condemnation. (In the words of another Tradition) We made a pledge that we will not try to stage a coup against the ruler until (in the words of the Prophet) you see him guilty of unambiguous kufr and there is a clear proof of this from God Himself (then you can deprive him of power)."*

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Fitn; *باب قول النبي مسترون بعدى امورا تنكرونها*)  
 Muslim, Kitabul Amarat *باب وجوب طاعة الامراء في غير معصية... الخ*

From this we learn that a Muslim has to find out whether the ruler's order is against the order of Allah and His Messenger or not. If it is not against the order of Allah and His Messenger, then obedience to the ruler is binding upon him; and if the ruler is at cross purposes with Allah and His Messenger, then a Muslim will not obey him and he will remove him from his post.

These Traditions do not refer to the head of a Muslim party who has no political power and they refer to a Muslim ruler who is legally responsible to guide the Muslims in spiritual and temporal matters and who has the power to lead them according to the Qur'an and the Hadith. However, we can comprehend from these Traditions the nature of relationship that obtains between a lesser leader and his followers. A political ruler of the Muslims has the power to enforce his ruling upon the Muslims and it will not be possible for a leader without political power to enforce his order. He can only exercise moral authority. When a person concedes that another

gentleman is his spiritual leader, then loyalty to him becomes imperative as long as his leadership does not go against the religion. Otherwise he will be violating the pledge made to the leader. It is a severe trial for a Muslim to accept voluntarily and joyously another person as a ruler and continue to obey him without any political pressure simply because Allah approves of a life lived in party cohesiveness and because there can be no true service to religion without a party. Though this ordeal is fairly severe, those people who constitute a party for the service of Islam have to pass it. Otherwise their objective will not be realized.

### (iii) Charitable View

The Islamic law prohibits unnecessary conjecture with regard to people's faith and morals. The reason is:

إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ

*"Suspicion in some cases is a sin."*

(Qur'an 49:12)

Any person who employs suspicion and doubt without justification in assessing a second person will feel free to ascribe unfounded statement about him. It is obvious that he has no right to do so. A believer has to avoid a serious religious and moral sin by accusing a person of being a criminal when he has not committed any crime. In the words of the Qur'an, the believers constitute a fraternity. The desirable kind of relationship

among the brothers has a charitable attitude as its basis. If this attitude is absent, brothers turn into enemies and the male parent ceases to trust his son. A charitable attitude puts a turbulent relationship on an even keel; suspicion vitiates friendliness.

As a matter of principle, one Muslim has to trust another Muslim and to look upon him as a well-wisher, confidant, sympathizer, and trustworthy and should in no way sense danger from him with regard to his life and property and honour. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) says "One Muslim is a brother of another Muslim; he neither oppresses, nor abandons, nor ridicules him and treats his blood, his property, and his standing in society as too sacred to be harmed."

(Muslim Kitabul Birr wa silah, chapter on the prohibition of  
atrocities on a Muslim)

A charitable attitude fosters trust and suspicion liquidates trust.

When a man begins to mistrust another person, then everything about him becomes unnerving. This mistrust increases to a point when his speech, his writing, his conversation, his endeavours, everything is seen as a trick to cause him harm. There is a presumption that every word and deed of his is definitely aimed against the mistrusting person and on its basis the mistrusting person determines his conduct towards him. When this virus touches a party, its discipline goes haywire. It appears as



though one member is conspiring against another, and the party is not functioning for a higher purpose but its function is to hatch plots against its comrades and to put them to public humiliation. This state of affairs brings to an end the prestige and the work of the party.

The ambience in the party should be such that one should look upon the other as a sincere, friendly, and sympathetic well-wisher. Without mutual goodwill this ambience cannot emerge. Every member should have a positive attitude towards every other member. If any adverse report about a member reaches him, he should not give credence to it immediately but interpret it in the most charitable light or dismiss it as a misunderstanding of the narrator of the report. If it becomes necessary to collect information about the shortcomings of a person, do not discuss them until irrefutable information has been collected because it is a sin to give publicity to unverified information. If the collection of such information is not in the best interests of the person concerned both in this world and in the next, discretion demands complete suspension of such a probe.

It is essential that there should be mutual goodwill among the members of the party from a few special angles.

(1) Members of a party that has come into existence with the avowed intention of serving Islam should

mutually share a positive attitude about each other with regard to their spirituality and morality because they seek admission to the party with the determination to cast their lives in the Islamic mould. We should believe that their determination is pure and sincere. We do not have any evidence to the contrary. However, it should not be forgotten that there may be people, weak in will power and temperament, who are not able to conform fully to the dictates of the religion in spite of their desire and endeavour. There may also be people who, though belonging to a religious organization, harbour unwittingly anti-religious ideas and predilections which trigger the occurrence of undesirable actions from time to time. This is just the result of an inadequate corrective measure. If they are reformed, then it is hoped that they will bring their defects under control by themselves. A significant observation, not to be overlooked anytime, is that mere determination to become good does not transform a human being into an angel and he still remains human, and so can never be purged of foibles, and is certainly capable of committing inadvertent lapses. What has to be seen is to find out whether he has the desire to uphold Islam or not. If he has, then even after a most serious lapse, he will not go far away from religion but return to it and return with such gusto that he will overcome all his weaknesses. So, on seeing the mistake of a man imbued with a desire to uphold Islam, do not

doubt the genuineness of his desire. Instead, use corrective measures as it may be a human frailty after all. This will be the right course to adopt for your benefit as well as for his.

(2) Prevalence of the difference of opinion is quite natural in a party. If sincerity characterises this difference, it will not be harmful to the party; it may even be necessary up to a point for the progressive thinking of the party. In fact, if the difference of opinion is totally non-existent in a party, it will signal the death of intellect in the party. When four discerning persons discuss a topic, there will be no homogeneity in their thinking. If they belong to a party, there may be or should be unanimity in their thinking with regard to the basic principles but the same unanimity in details is not necessary. Differences can be allowed. The party will cease to exist if differences crop up in the matter of the basics and if differences in the details are not allowed, then the individuality of the members will be totally suppressed and there will be stagnation of cognitive skills in the party.

The ambience of the party must foster respect for different opinions in the party and there should be no room for mutual suspicion. You may hold your opinion to be true and the opposite opinion to be wrong, but you have no right to insist that your opinion is sincere and another person's opinion is devoid of sincerity because

every member of the party is as sincere as you are towards the welfare of the party. In the matters of the party, interpretative error of judgment is possible, deliberate deviation is not possible. The right to allege that Mr. X is deviating from and rebelling against the ideology of the party is conceded but to make such an allegation you must have clinching evidence. Mere hostile conjecture is not enough.

(3) Not all members of the party are workaholics of the same scale. Some are slow-moving and some have faster pace. Some work for the party day in, day out; and some find it difficult to spare time for the party. There are people who are capable of sacrificing everything for the party and there are people who are parsimonious. The reason is that members of the party have varying degrees of commitment to the party objectives. This variation is reflected in their work for the party. Remove the weakness where it is seen but do not assert that this weakness is an expression of unfaithfulness to and of detachment from the party. Well, sometimes this weakness tends to become the cause of unfaithfulness to the party. At that time you can definitely criticise him in order to protect the party from his evil. If this is not the case, then do not look upon lukewarm activity as a distortion of one's commitment and do not consider every wrong act to be an act of treachery against the party. Otherwise, weakness will not be removed and the door

for improvement will be closed.

#### (iv) Sincerity and Goodwill towards All

Hazrat Thameem Dari (Allah be pleased with him) says that Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) repeated the following statement three times:

الدين النصيحة

Ad deen un naseehah -

*Religion is synonymous with advice and sincerity.*

The Companions questioned him "Sincerity - Towards whom?" Then he replied,

لله ولكتابه ولرسوله ولائمة المسلمين وعامتهم

*"Sincerity towards All, towards His Book, towards His Messenger, towards the leaders of the Muslims, and towards common people."*<sup>1</sup>

This is a comprehensive Tradition. It underscores the importance of advice and goodwill for the party formed for the service and regeneration of Islam.

'Sincerity' is not a word with a limited connotation. It is a word whose semantic range is wide. To have a fair idea of the width, consider a relationship based on it. It is agreed on all hands that a parent is a sincere well-wisher of his son. Analyse this goodwill towards the child. Personal rest and comfort are subordinated to the child's rest and comfort. The father suffers but keeps the child

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(1) Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Iman, chapter on Deen as Naseeha- For further details, my book "Maroof and Munkar" may be read.

calm and safe, and is always worried about the child's progress, the child's education and training and the child's health. In all these matters the father is deeply sincere, serves the child selflessly and does not want any evil to befall him.

If this goodwill becomes prominent in a party then love, affection, sympathy and harmony will pervade widely. Relationships will have the same quality which characterises the relationship between the father and the son. Goodwill is the capital of the party ensuring its survival and has multi-dimensional relevance.

#### **(a) Sincerity towards Ideology**

Every party has a fixed goal, some principles and postulates distinguishing it from other parties. As long as the party espouses that goal, principles and postulates, it will survive and prosper. Otherwise it will cease to function. If it survives without such an espousal, it will be indistinguishable from other parties. Sincerity towards the party, established for the conveying of the message of Islam and its triumph, demands that its goal and basic postulates are zealously guarded and that no effort should be spared to ensure that the party does not deviate from its avowed goals. If the party abandons them and you remain silent, then it means that you don't love it and that you do not evince interest in the ideological survival of the party or in its ideological betrayal. You have to

evaluate every initiative of the party from the perspective of its ideals, whether it conforms to or deviates from them. Whenever you notice any deviation, it is your bounden duty to make the party fall in line with its ideals. If the members are vigilant enough in safeguarding the party ideals, the possibility of the party remaining tied to its ideals seems remote.

### **(b) Sincerity towards Party Work**

One aspect of sincerity towards the party is to lend full cooperation in the works of the party. The party work should be done with the same spirit as the personal work is done. Stick to your duty firmly and steadfastly at any party front to which you are posted and discharge the duty entrusted to you with dedication, calmly and unhurriedly. If you are single-minded about the message that the party wishes to disseminate should spread and triumph in the world - then you are the finest well-wisher of the party. If the pre-occupation is not all-consuming, then your sincerity towards the party is not perfect.

### **(c) Sincerity towards the Leader**

An aspect of comprehensive sincerity is that you must wish your leader well, you must desire his success, you must pray for him, you must give him good counsel and you must obey him cheerfully. It is an expression of ill-will towards him if you do not cooperate with him in

good deeds and if you do not restrain him when he is doing something wrong.

#### (d) Sincerity towards the Members/Office-bearers

The chief of the party must be a well-wisher of his subordinates and maintain their religiosity and guide them and treat them on an equal footing and should not prefer one to the other, and should not wish ill of anyone, and should not nurse a grudge against anyone, and should be affectionate towards one and all. The relationship between the leader and the led should be regulated by sincerity, affection and goodwill. This idea is elaborated in a Tradition narrated by Hazrat Auf bin Malik Ashja'i (Allah be pleased with him) wherein Allah's Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) said:

خَيْرُ اِمْتِكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ تُحِبُّوْنَهُمْ وَ تُحِبُّوْنَكُمْ وَ تُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَ  
يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ يَرَارُ اِمْتِكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ تُبْغِضُوْنَهُمْ وَ يَبْغِضُوْنَكُمْ وَ  
تَلْعَنُوْنَهُمْ وَ يَلْعَنُوْنَكُمْ.

*"The best leaders are those whom you love and who love you, and for whose welfare you pray and who pray for your welfare. The worst leaders are those whom you dislike and who dislike you and whom you curse and who curse you."*

(Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Amarat, chapter on leaders)

#### (e) Sincerity Among the Rank and File

The rank and file of the party should be full of



goodwill towards one another. They should exhort one another to do good and prevent one another from doing evil. Mutual persuasion to follow the straight path and to remain steadfast must be there. In religious as well as temporal matters, they must function as good companions, counsellors, and helpers for one another. In this way they will be bonded into a fraternity and they should live together, wishing well mutually, sympathizing with one another genuinely and sharing grief truly.

When you have thrown in your lot with a party to serve Islam, you should not forget that training and reform of the individuals is the concern not only of the office - bearers but also of yours. Whenever you discern a weakness in any individual member, you should try to remove it from him too. Undoubtedly, it is a formidable task but the difficulty of the task can be removed if you entertain goodwill towards the co-members of the party and if you try to reform them as a sympathiser and well-wisher and not as a Momus and a caviller. Any corrective measure without goodwill cannot yield a durable benefit; any corrective measure taken under a temporary emotional state cannot produce a good result. Until the target individual looks upon you as a sympathiser, he will pay no heed to your advice; and even if he listens to you, the effect of your advice will be less than required. Unfortunately, if he suspects your

intentions, your advice will be counterproductive. Goodwill is not a matter of claim by you and its immediate endorsement by the addressee; it requires a holistic change in the pattern of your behaviour. It is necessary that your talk, your character and your behaviour are coordinated to produce the desired impression of your being a man of goodwill. The method you adopt to reform an individual must not be emotionally wounding but be emotionally uplifting through love and sympathy and a genuine impression of sincerity. Any weakness need not be publicly censured but it is better to have it privately sorted out.

Imam Shafi'i (May Allah show mercy to him) said, "A one-to-one advice is advice; advice tendered in public turns into censure." Remember, public exposure of a man's weakness is a major sin. Allah humiliates that person who wishes to humiliate another person and no one can rehabilitate that person who is humiliated by Allah.

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